

Sham
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IN FOCUS

SHANMUKHA

SHANMUKHA goes analytical in this issue bringing to fore the inner core of the Bhakti Cult as portrayed in Song-forms.

Srividya as visualised by Muthuswamy Dikshitar in his Kritis gives us an insight into a great Tatva.

Tiruppugazh, the immortal poem of Arunagirinathar, is analysed for its musical excellence, literary flourish and philosophic content in another article.

Ludwig Van Beethoven, hailed as the "Shakespeare of Music", was a revolutionary who created faster than he discarded. Sensing the art of music confined to a niche class of society as a pastime, he made it broadly human, rather superhuman, more expressive. He was influenced by Indian philosophy. He is the touchstone by which others are evaluated. His life and music is analysed in the articles culled out from our archives.

What is Tradition in classical Music? A researcher pens a brief but clear perspective of this much discussed topic.

Music for Body and Soul brings to you the latest research in the therapy of music.

"The Meet of Two Yogis" does a magic of yoga on music.

Tributes to crusaders in art and literature are paid with a difference. To Calcutta Krishnamoorthy, a very original musician, his Sishyas pay pranams. The coy-girl turned a crusader, Kalyanikutty Amma who toiled for the revival and refinement of Mohini Attam as a performing art is remembered through her own paper presented at a conference. Among others, Sangeethacharya Pt. K. G. Ginde and Pt. Jitendra Abhisheki are paid rich tributes.

Speeches, songs and dance marked Kalki Krishnamurthy's Birth Centenary Celebrations. A profile and report find a place in this issue.

Last but not the least, Avvai 'Shanmukam's homage to the theatre titan Pammal Sambanda Mudaliar, paid two and a half decades ago, is worth recalling even today.

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The Srividya Through Music As Revealed

By Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar

By Nandakumar Varma

The twentyfourth verse of *Soundarya Lahari* says :-

*Jagatsute Dhata Hariravati Rudraha
Kshapayate
Tiraskurvannetat svamapi vapure
shastira yati !
Sada poorvaha sarvam tadida
manugrahnatiche sivaha
Tavāgnyā Matambya kshanachalitayor
Bhroolatikayah ||*

The five primary functions of creation, sustenance, destruction, concealment and benediction (i.e., Sristi, Sthiti, Samhara, Thirodhana and Anugraha) are being performed by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Maheswara and Sadasiva on the orders from Devi expressed by the movements of Her eyebrows.

The above verse assigns a definite role for Devi in activating the Supreme Being to perform the five-fold duties. That is why the symbolism of Siva with five faces has come to stay. Four of these faces emanate the four Vedas and the fifth, i.e., Isana face emanates the 'Pranava' or Nada Brahman.

Each face is also associated with a particular aspect of Devi. The five faces represent the five elements, i.e., Prithvi (earth), Ap (water, Tejas (fire), Vayu (air), and Akasa (space). In the first four faces, the Siva-Tattva and the Sakti-Tattva are identifiably separate and in the fifth, they are inseparably united as Ardhanariswara.

The presiding deities of the temples at Kanchipuram, Jambukesvaram, Tiruvannamalai, Kalahasti and Chidambaram are representing the five pairs. Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar has composed songs on all these five deities wherein he

has brought out the correlation between Siva and Sakti.

Pancha-Brahma-Swaroopini, Pacha-Prethaasanaseena and Panchabhuthesi are the names in the *Lalitha Sahasranama* which collectively refer to these five duo.

The first face of Siva is called Vamadeva which is described as :

*"Gowram Kudkumapatkilam Sutilakam
Vyāpāndugandasthalam
Bruvikshepakataksha Veekshanala
satsansktha Karnotplam
Sniksham Bimbaphalashravam
Prahasitam Neelala Kalankritam
Vande Yajushaveda Goshajanakam
Vaktram harasyottaram||*

(This face of Siva is known as Vamadeva, "White in complexion, adorned with Sindhura dot with shining white cheeks and side glances, moving eye brows and wet lips resembling Bimba fruit, emanating gentle-smile and attractive with blue frontal hairs and producing the sounds of Yajurveda - this face of Siva towards the north, I worship.")

The Goddess Saraswathi, the presiding deity of the intellect as described by the terms Sristikartri, Brahmarupa in the *Lalitha Sahasranama* is the motivating energy of the northern face of Siva. Their combination is symbolised in the Prithvi Linga (the 1st of the five elements) at Kanchipuram. Muthuswami Dikshitar praises this Siva-Sakti form identifying it with the Prithvi Linga called Ekambareswara and Kamakshi at Kanchipuram in his composition *Chintayamakandamoolaskan-*

-dam (Bhairavi) and Kanchadabayataksi Kamakshi (Kamala Manohari). The clue for this correlation is found in the identical adjectives, Mandahasavadana and Mandahasavadane.

Prāyeyāchalamindukunda dhavalam
gokshara phenaprabham |
Bhasmābyadgamanad gadehadana
jwalavaleelochnam |
Vishnu Brahma Rudganārchita padam
Rig Vedanadodayam
Vandeham Sakalam Kalankarahitam
Sthānormukham paschimam |

(White like the Himavan and Jasmine, shining like foam of the boiling milk, smeared with ashes and having the eye which is resplendent with the flames that burnt Manmatha, worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu and Maruts and emanating the sounds of the Rig Veda, bearing the crescent moon and devoid of any blemish, the west looking face (Sadyojata), I adore.)

This aspect of Siva is connected with the Lakshmi form of Sakti which is referred to as Goptri and Govindarupini in the Sahasranama symbolising opulence.

These two forms of Siva and Sakti, Dikshitar identifies with the Lord Jambunatha and his consort Akhilandeswari at Thiruvanaikoil. Being the Ap-linga, Dikshitar praises it in his Kriti Jamboopate in Yamuna Kalyani and Sreemata Siva Vamange in Begada. There is another pair of reference Parvatata prathitapdhalinga vibho and Himatrija Matrujamboopatisahite.

The south-looking face of Siva called Aghora is described in the verse :

Katab, bramaranja janadyutinibham
Vyāvruṭṭa pingekshanam
Karnotbhasitabhogimastaka
Maniprotphulla damshttradkuram
Sarpaprotaka palasukti Sakalavya
keerna Sachekaram
Vande Dakshinaveeshwarasya
Vadanam che Atharvavedodayam

(Blue like the water-laden cloud, collirium and the bee, having revolving eye balls, red in colour and with a pair of canine teeth lighted by the glow of the gems on the hoods of the serpents forming the ear-rings, bedecked with serpents and having a crescent moon on the head - I bow to the south looking face of Siva which is the source of the Atharva Veda.)

This Aghora form is co-ordinated with Durga the Goddess of health and longevity identified in the Sahasranama as Samharini and Rudrarupa. This is the Thejolinga dominated by Fire and Heat and worshipped on Thiruvannamalai hills.

Dikshitar has identified this pair in Arunachalanatha of Thiruvannamalai through his composition in Karadhruta Sarangam Tejo lingam in Saranga Raga. We do not have a separate composition from him on the Goddess Apithakuchamba though he mentions Her name in the song referred to above.

The fourth face called Tatpuruṣa is described in the following verse :-

Samvartāgnitanditprataptakanakapraspardi
Tejomayam
Ghambeeradhwani nāda veda janakam
Tāmraśhvaram Sundaram
Ardheendu dyati phalapingala jathabara
prabadhorakam
Vande Siddhasurasurendra namitam
poorva mukham soolinaham |

("I worship the east looking Siva, the trident bearer, shining with an effulgence which surpasses the fire of the deluge, lightning and red-hot gold. Charming with its rosy lips and with its grey-matted hairlock carrying the crescent moon; adored by Siddhas, Devas and Asuras and resounding with the resonating sound of Sama Gana.")

This is associated with the Thirodhana-sakthi or concealing power referred to in the Sahasranama Thirodhanakari and Easwari. The feminine energy is Savithri, the bestower of love and devotion. Dikshitar recognises this divine couple in the Vayu Linga of Kalahasti and His consort Gnanaprasoonamba through his composition Sri Kalahastisa Sameerakara in Huseni and Jnanaprasoonambike Deenajanavane in Kalyani.

The fifth face of Siva called the Isana looking upwards is described in the following verse :-

Vyaktāvyaktaniroopitam cha paramam
shatrishanta tatwashvikam
Tasmāduttaratatwamaksharamiti
dhyeyam Sadā yoghibihim |
Omkaradi Samastha mantra janakam
sookshmati Sookshmam param
Vande panchamameeshvarasya
vadanam kam vyāpi Tejomayam ||

("I bow to the fifth face of Easwara facing the sky and radiating effulgence, which is described as both manifest and unmanifest over-reaching the 36 Tattvas [which are perishable] and also the last imperishable Tattva meditated upon by yogins and the fountain source of all the Mantras starting from "Om" and subtlest of the subtle and supermost principle [Sarvotkrstam].")

This is the Isana form with the inherent Sakti, Sivakamasundari, the presiding deity of Chidambara where it is worshipped as Akasalinga, a formless manifestation. The feminine Tattva of this pair is mentioned as Sadasiva and Anugrahada in the Sahasranama. Dikshitar describes this in his composition in Ananda Natana Prakasam Daharākasam in Kedara Raga and in Sivakameshwarim. Chidambara pureswarim (Kalyani.)

The above Five Siva-Sakti forms are performing the five functions of Sristi, Sthithi, Samhara, Tirodhana and Anugraha and hence the name Pancakritya-parayana which is again eulogised by Dikshitar collectively in Pancha kritya Kritbhavitaya in Sankarabharanam.

In all the above five pairs, the Siva aspect and Sakti aspect are kept distinct for Saguna worship. But Sankara in his very first verse of Soundarya Lahari emphasises that Siva alone is not capable of any of the five functions without Sakti's involvement. The entire universe (Prapancha) is governed by these five functions.

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What is 'Tradition' in Classical Music?

By S. Sankaranayanan

Art is an aesthetic creation of man.

A fine art is a stylised or refined expression of emotions and feelings meant for appreciation by a refined mind ('*Sahridaya*' in Sanskrit). A refined mind is a cultured mind, a mind deliberately cultivated to appreciate beauty in accordance with the principles of good taste.

Art music, alias classical music, is not only a fine art, but the finest of fine arts.

Good taste governs all music, classical or otherwise. However, classical music differs from music of other kinds in one important respect, and that is in its objectives.

The aim of classical music is to evoke aesthetic delight (*Gana Rasa*) in the listeners. It is the inherent power of the various formations of the musical notes of a melody mould that creates the emotive experience. The artiste, through his rendering, portrays the varied moods of the melody. The artiste's expression is the *Bhava*, and the listener's experience, the *Rasa*.

'Culture', of which music forms a part, is the realm of cultivated tastes, both expressed and experienced. Anything that is both worthwhile and desirable to be preserved, need to be cultivated-be it a crop, habit, behaviour, expression or taste. At any given time, the number of people who have an interest or inclination to cultivate good tastes (to experience *Rasanubhuti*) constitute a small proportion of the listeners. They are the small circle of connoisseurs. Treatises on Indian Music term them '*Bahu sruta*' or *Guni*' - intelligent *rasikas* who enjoy *Gana Rasa* and appreciate it with a sense deep understanding.

Tradition, in the general sense, denotes a custom, opinion or belief handed down to posterity. In relation to classical music, tradition is governed by expression and experience, portrayal of the *Bhava* of the musical piece and *Rasanubhuti*. Both are affected by the principle of good taste, and together they constitute what is suggested by the term 'tradition'.

All traditions are a function of time. Being a performing art, classical music lives both in space and time. As time itself is a medium of change as well as a measure of its frequencies, no tradition ever remains unchanged in absolute terms. What does not change is the principle of 'requirement of good taste'. 'Requirement of good taste' constitutes the very core of classical music. Good taste is reflected in the quality of music and its appreciation, it demands a high degree of discipline in learning and training, as also in listening.

Tradition is, therefore, a continuum of growth and refinement, incessantly reshaping renewing and revitalising itself, nourished by the insights and wisdom gained by the practitioners of successive generations. Consequently, at a given time, traditions come to represent the very best of the creative expressions of the gifted exponents and cultural vitality of the societies of the generations that have gone by. In the process of its continuous evolution, traditions assimilate the elements of social beliefs, philosophy, behavioural norms, and even mysticism, all of which go into making culture composite. Hence, in all ancient yet extant civilization like that of India, traditions, including musical traditions, have come to be regarded as guardians of cultural identity.

It is the dynamics of this continuous-process of rejuvenation that is sought to be signified by the cliché 'tradition and innovation'.

In classical music, tradition is synonymous with quality of music and standard of performance and its appreciation. Promotion and preservation of excellence is its very *raison d'etre*. Much of what else that masquerades as 'tradition' is ritualistically performed formalism, which only tends to perpetuate misbelief of the uninformed.

It is the exquisite musical creations of great *Vaggeyakaras* and the maestro expositions of those pieces that keep traditions alive and afloat. Masterpieces of such high standard, created centuries ago, are models of the harmonious marriage of sound and sense, and hence they continue to entertain, enthral and elevate connoisseurs of successive generations.

Courtesy "Bhavan's Journal"

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TIRUPPUGAZH

(THE IMMORTAL POEM)

By T. S. Vasudevan

From ancient times, the conception of all arts, sculpture, literature, music and dance has been spiritual. Many of our poets, saints, philosophers and musicians found song and poetry to be the most effective medium to teach the spiritual ideals of life to the masses.

The greatest philosopher, reformer and preceptor of our times Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada has not only left a rich legacy of the rarest gems of Advaita philosophy but also enriched, profoundly, the devotional literature with his soul-stirring hymns clothed in the most lucid and lilting Sanskrit.

Besides this mighty task of unifying all religions, Adi Sankara established the worship of several deities on a firm and systematic foundation. Of these, the "Kumara" cult, relating to Kumara or Subrahmanya, the celebrated son of Lord Siva, was firmly established and popularised in the Tamil country by the divine sage Agastya, initiated by Lord Subrahmanya as the father of the Tamil language. But it was ordained to Arunagirinathar to rejuvenate the Muruga cult through his exquisite songs called *Tiruppugazh*.

Tradition and History

Arunagirinathar was born of scholarly and pious parents at Tiruvannamalai in North Arcot district of Tamilnadu. Though endowed with knowledge of the Vedic lore and Tamil religious literature, he was steeped in worldly life. Suddenly one day he got so vexed with his life that he decided to end it. But it was his fortune that he was not only miraculously saved by Lord Muruga, but also blessed with an unsurpassed gift of poesy.

Having renounced the worldly life, he could not but reflect upon its evil effects with remorse and aversion, which he expressed in many of

his songs. Nevertheless his intense penance and devotion inspired by his family deity, Lord Muruga, forced him to pour forth thousands of songs, as and when he visited most of the shrines dedicated to the Lord.

Special mention must be made of the following places : the Arupadaiveedu shrines (described by Poet Nakkirar of the Sangam age in his immortal *Tirumurugatruppada*) - Tirupparankunram, Tiruchendur, Tiruvavinankudi (Palani), Tiruveragam (Swamimalai), Kunruthoradal (all hill shrines), Pazhamudirsolai, Tiruvannamalai, Vayalur, Viralimalai, Kollimalai, Tiruchengodu, Tiruttani, Tiruvidaikkazhi etc.

Research scholars have determined the saint's period of life as A.D.1330 to 1405. He was patronised by Bukka, one of the Vijayanagar chieftains, who ruled over Tiruvannamalai, and was also called by the name of Prauda Deva Maharaja.

An Important Landmark

Tiruppugazh means praise of God (holy songs). Immediately when Lord Muruga saved him, the first song was also initiated to him with the world *Muthu* (Pearl), and the first rhythmical line runs as under ending with refrain (*Thongal*).

Muththaithiru paththithirunagai
Athikkirai saththichcharavana
Muththikkoru viththukkurupara
(Ena Vodu).

The floodgates of the saint's wonderful poesy were really opened at Vayalur. It was Poyya Ganapati (deity presiding over Muladhara Chakra) who showered His grace on him and directed him to sing Lord Muruga's glories with special reference to his peacock, Kadappa

garland, his powerful weapon (*vel*), banner (cock), his holy feet and Vayalur (Seyppadi). The poet expresses to Lord Ganesa for having blessed him to sing Tiruppugazh and also frequently commemorates the shrine in other places.

It was at Chidambaram (sacred to Saivites as Koil, or temple, the abode of Lord Nataraja) that the saint was blessed with the initiation of the holy *Pranava*, and he poured forth nearly 63 songs in breath-taking metres (*Chandams*) of wonderful variety of musical sounds. Incidentally, the five-faced Lord Siva (*Pancha Mukha*) who appeared as the six-faced Lord Shanmukha, is echoed in many a song.

The next important shrine visited by the poet was Swamimalai (known as Tiruveragam, the fourth Padai Veedu), where he was sanctified with the Lord's *Pada darsana* (vision of Feet). It was here that the Lord, known as Swaminatha, revealed his real identity with Lord Siva (the Primordial Guru Dakshinamurty) under the pretext of giving *upadesa*.

Tiruchengodu is another celebrated shrine near Tiruchirapalli, amidst sylvan surroundings, fit for concentration and meditation. Here the saint repents that Brahma had not blessed him with 4,000 eyes in order to feast on Lord Muruga's splendour. By this time, the poet's fame had spread far and wide, the devotees from all quarters admiring the wonderful songs.

The largest number of songs (96) was sung by the saint at Palani (Tiruvavinangudi), the third *Padaiveedu*, at the foot hill. This place is famous for the contest between Lord Ganesa and Lord Muruga for a fruit (*Pazham*). On the hill above, Palani Andavar shines as the symbol of *Jnana* (ultimate truth).

At Pazhamudirsolai (the sixth *Padai veedu*) the saint advocates renunciation as the prerequisite to Ashtanga Yoga, which is preferable to Hatha Yoga.

Arumugam (Shanmukha) is the supreme being, the source of prosperity. The dancing peacock is indeed the "Om" mantra; this body made of Nada and Bindu represents the unity of Siva and Sakti. Soham (Hamsa) is the holiest of all mantras by which one can get enlightened. O Lord Muruga, will you not bless one with such a boon, Lord of Solaimalai!

At Tirupparangunram (first Padai veedu), where Saint Nakkirar sang the *Tirumurugatrupadai*, glorifying Lord Muruga as his saviour, Arunagirinathar beseeches the Lord to save him from the pangs of death, and also release him from the cycle of births and deaths (*Unaithinam...*)

In another song (*Varaithadam...*) he implores the Lord who wedded Devayanai, the foster daughter of Indra, after vanquishing the formidable foes, Taraka, Singamuhka and Surapadma, to bless him with *Pada Diksha* (placing the lotus feet on his head). He reveals that the variety of beautiful rhythmical metres (*Chandams*) was really inspired by the ornaments, viz., *Tandai*, *Nupura*, *Silambu*, that adorned the Lord's feet.

Besides the celebrated six shrines, the saint visited more than 200 temples, mostly dedicated to Lord Muruga and poured forth enchanting songs in his praise, following the path of the Saivite and Vaishnavite saints of yore. This inspired thousands of people with devotion. His pioneering work was continued through the succeeding centuries by many a savant like Kumaragurupara, Thayumanavar, Ramalinga 'Vallalar', Pamban Kumaraguru Dasar and Vallimalai Sachidananda.

Publication and Propagation

One V. T. Subramanya Pillai, a staunch devotee and a District Munsif by profession, unearthed many *Tiruppugazh* songs from old manuscripts and published about 1,300 of them in 1909. His son V. S. Chengalvaroya Pillai took to the writing of a detailed commentary of all the

works of the saint as his life's mission. He also brought out a unique compilation, '*Murugavel Panniru Tirumarai*', similar to the holy Saivite counterpart.

But it was reserved for Vallimalai Sachidananda Swamigal (1870-1950 A.D.) to complete the task of propagation throughout the land.

He started many *Sangams* (associations) while on pilgrimage and organised the *Padi Vizha* (Step Festival) at the famous hill shrine of Tiruttani, near Madras, in January 1918. This festival is now attended by lakhs of devotees every year and similar ones have also been started in other shrines. The whole atmosphere in our land, and especially in the principal cities, is now surcharged with *Muruga Bhakti*. The thrilling songs are heard everywhere through recorded music, festivals in temples and public concerts.

Musical Excellence

Unlike his contemporaries (Purandaradasa, Annamacharya and Narayana Teertha), Arunagirinathar ingeniously created a marvellous variety of rhythmic patterns called "Sandam" (equivalent to "Chandas" in Sanskrit prosody). Tirugnana Sambandar, the Saivite child prodigy (author of *Thevaram* hymns), was indeed the originator of the Sandam. Arunagirinathar admired him, and adopted him as his guru and also glorified him as the very incarnation of Lord Muruga. (References found in many songs bear testimony to this fact.)

But Arunagirinathar perfected this style by skilfully introducing a novel refrain (*Thongal*) at the end of each stanza. (*Thongal* means pendant which adorns a garland.) Each song, made of several stanzas, is set to a particular metrical design, which is continued throughout. (Some rare songs are also set to a mixed variety of *Sandams*). In many a song, the author deftly introduces the particular *Sandam* in the body of the song itself, namely :

Thindi thimithodi theediththeedi
Thanda thana thana thanath thana
Chenchenagu chegu thalath thodu

- *Nadamadum thongal*,
(*Mundu Tamizh Malai*, Tiruchendur.)

This describes vividly the dance of the peacock, vehicle of Lord Muruga, who is requested to appear before the devotee.

The innumerable *Sandams* are found to fit in meticulously with all the Talas of Carnatic music with the exception of some which are classified as *Angataalas*. But the original Ragas (tunes), employed by the author, are now not in vogue. Nevertheless, the scintillating syllables by themselves enhance the melody of any Raga, suitable to the Bhava (meaning) of the song.

Literary Excellence

In the exquisite and faultless beauty of expression, lyrical grandeur, combination of chaste Tamil with graceful Sanskrit, vehement and crisp elucidation of truths, and the vivid description of episodes, Arunagirinathar stands unsurpassed. A few excerpts from his hymns are sufficient to corroborate the fact :-

1. Bala Skanda's dance (Tiruchendur)

Thandayani Vendayam kinkini
Sadangiyyum
Thankazal Silambudan Konjave nin
Thandayinai munparindu Inbavuri
Kondunan
Sandodamaindu Ninru Anbupala.....

2. Saravana Jatha namo Karunaitheetha namo nama
Sathadalapada namonama--Abhirama
Tharunaka Dheera namo nama
Nirupama Veera namo namo
Samadalavoora Namonama...
Jagadeesa (Vinayaka Malai)

3. Mother Kausalya fondling her lovely son Rama (Tiruchendur) :

*Endai Varuga Raghunayaka Varuga
Mayinda Varuga Magane Ini Varuga
Ingu Varuga Arase Varuga
mulaiyunga Varuga malar sudida Varuga
Enru parivinodu Kosalai pugala varu
mayan....*

4. *Theerappini Theera Jivathmajnana
Ooratchiyadana Orvakkarulvaye.....*
(Porur)

(O Porur Muruga, will you not enlighten me with Jivatma Janana (self-realisation) relieving me from the cycle of birth and death, the deadly disease?)

Philosophic Content

Sage Yajnavalkya in his *Smriti* says :

He who knows the truth, of veena music, is an expert in Sruti and understanding their varieties and Talas, he reaches the path of salvation without exertion.

The easy path of *Nada Yoga*, prescribed above has been followed by Saint Arunagirinathar who echoes the same idea in his song, *Jnangal Porigal Kudi...* The *Nada* referred to is "Omkaara", the *Pranava* (the Udgita of the *Upanishads*), and the saint declares that Lord Muruga is the very embodiment of *Nada*.

*Nada Roopa Manada Ragaththuraivone
(Kadi Modi Vadadi).*

The *Pranava* is represented by the dancing peacock, the vehicle of Lord Muruga.

*Ana Thani mantra Roopanilai Kondadu
Adu Mayil enbadariyene (Vadhina....)*

The saint prays to Lord Muruga to grant him the state of *Saropya* (leading ultimately to *Sayujya*) wherein the Lord and his devotee mount the peacock of jnana and travel around the world, *Jnangal Porigal Kudi....* (Palani)

Arunagirinathar prescribes the following requisites for securing realisation of the self; purity of mind, body and speech; control of the five senses, company of the virtuous, and above all concentrated devotion.

In conclusion, the song referred to below relating to a shrine by name *Siruvapuri* (30 k.m. North of Madras City) contains the essence of the Advaitic philosophy of Sri Adi Sankara:

*Seethala Varija Pada Namu Nama....
Maraitthedum
Sekharamana Pratapa.... Agamasara
Soroopa*

In the latter half Lord Muruga is glorified as the direct brother of Lord Ganesa, the dearest son of Lord Siva and Parvati, the affectionate nephew of Lord Vishnu, and self-brilliant like "Surya Murti".

Courtesy : "Tattvaṛoka"



Kalki - The Crusader

By Dr. Sulochana Rajendran

It was mid-forties which was the crepuscule of a dying alien rule and when India was on the threshold of Independence. Bombay, the nerve-centre of Indian resurgence, was pulsating with pride over everything that was nationalistic, be it social, economic, political or cultural.

The visit of two titans of Tamil literature and freedom fighters T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar (TKC) and R. Krishnamurthy (Kalki) to Bombay at this time naturally generated a lot of enthusiasm and awe among the populace of Matunga(m) - the then mini South India of the metropolis. The South Indian Education Society had arranged a memorable reception in honour of the visiting dignitaries. With a surcharged atmosphere when the function started with the customary prayer by a top student of the school, an embarrassing slip (*Thanindadu* in lieu of *Thaniyum*) in one of the verses of Bharatiyar's patriotic song, "*Enru Thaniyum Inda Sudandira Daagam*", only increased the tension. The worrisome looks and anxious glances at each other by those on the dais only added to the suspense and awe.

Rose "Kalki" and assured the audience in his inimitable style that the slip was certainly pardonable "now that the foreigners are on the way out"; thus did he defuse the tense atmosphere and what a relief it was! A master of the occasion and a born optimist Kalki (born 1899) had his early moorings in Mayavaram of Tanjavur District in Tamil Nadu.

After a brief but brilliant educational career at the National College School, Tiruchirapalli, cut short because of his participation in the non-cooperation movement, followed by imprisonment and a stint under the great Tamil scholar and editor Shri V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar (Tiru V. Ka), Kalki joined the Gandhi Ashram, in

Tiruchengode (Salem District) which was run by Poojya Sri Rajaji. While in the Ashram, Kalki helped Rajaji edit *Vimochanam*, a journal intended to promote awareness amongst the public on the evils of alcoholism. In his spare time he also contributed to *Ananda Vikatan* under the pen-name "Kalki". The publisher of the magazine. Shri S. S. Vasana was much impressed by Kalki's writings and he requested Kalki to join him. As Editor, Kalki raised the merit of the magazine several fold within a short period of time. Imprisoned in 1941 for individual Satyagraha, he left the *Ananda Vikatan* after release, to start his journal *Kalki* with the active co-operation of friends, like, Shri T. Sadasivam and his wife Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, the musician non-pareil, who helped raise funds for the project.

Having given his pen name to the journal founded by him, Kalki rose to pinnacles of glory as its Editor. A prolific writer, he wrote on almost all subjects which engaged his attention. Novels, short stories, skits, literary and art criticisms, travelogues, poems, political essays etc., flowed from his pen and the popularity of the magazine he edited grew immensely. He blazed a new trail in Tamil journalism and created a crop of writers and journalists to emulate him. To quote a confrere: "He rescued Tamil from Pandits and pedants by writing in a style marked by lucidity and an artless simplicity that concealed much art". The classic historical novels in Tamil, *Parthipan Kanavu*, *Sivakamiyin Sapatham*, *Ponniyin Selvan*, written by Krishnamurthy and serialised in *Kalki* were great hits. Reading through his *Sivakamiyin Sapatham* we are brought face-to-face with people who are distinct and immortal as the rock temples they built at Mamallapuram. The work deals with the glories of Indian arts and is rated as his masterpiece, a classic in Tamil prose literature, not surpassed so far by any other work.

He also found time to involve himself in film production and the dialogues he wrote for *Thyagabhoomi* and *Meera* were resounding successes. His novels which found an outlet through the silver screen besides *Tyaga Bhoomi*, were *Kalvanin Kadali*, *Parthipan Kanavu* and *Poi Mann Karadu*. The songs he composed for the film *Meera* have been immortalised by the captivating voice of that Queen of Melody, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi. Though he did not lay claims to be a poet, some of the songs he composed were "unburdening of some deep and disturbing emotion, having the ingredients and quality of poetry." e.g., *Malaippoohudinile* etc.

Besides being a freedom fighter, writer and a journalist of eminence, Kalki was also an active social worker and reformist. He utilised his pen and journal to tackle social problems such as child marriage, illiteracy, untouchability etc. He became a part of Gandhian hurricane which swept Tamil Nadu in September 1921, when he had the first Darshan of the Mahatma. He took to Gandhism instantly and spread his ideals far and wide. His valuable contribution to "Gandheeyam" was his Tamil translation of the Mahatma's autobiography serialised in the Navashakti journal.

Kalki was one of those responsible for the renaissance of the ancient art form of Tamil Nadu, notably "Tamil Isai", Bharata Natyam and Drama.

Art is the expression which mirrors a nation's culture, Carnatic music is the most ancient music, a rich heritage inherited by Tamils through successive generations of musicians who have preserved its parampara and purity. Carnatic music is a rare gift of god and one must have His blessings to practise it and only a rigorous sadhaka can sustain it." (quoted by Sangeetha Kalanidhi Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer.)

Tamil Nadu has two great wonders not found anywhere in the world-one, the indestructible Rock

Temples of Mamallapuram and the other, the art of Bharathanalyam. Bharathanatyam is sculpture come alive, with intricate Hastas, Mudras and gesture nuances. An art that captivates even the uninitiated.

Day by day the art of Bharathanatyam gained ground attaining recognition even in the North and savants like Tagore lauded that this art was without any parallel. Could it be because of this that his pseudonym is synonymous with the avatar of Kaliyuga?

Kalki Krishnamurthy passed away in 1954. The Sahitya Akademy award was given to him posthumously for his novel *Alai Osai* which had the freedom movement as its background.

Many of his works have been translated into all the important languages in India and also in English, German, Russian bringing him national and international fame and recognition. The Gandhi Mandapam in Madras and the Bharathi Mandapam in Ettayapuram are not only monuments for these great sons of India but they also cherish the memory of "Kalki" who initiated the projects through his journal and worked ceaselessly for their completion.

It was heartening that Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha in association with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, the South Indian Education Society and Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, had taken the initiative of organising in a grand manner the Birth Centenary of "Kalki" Krishnamurthy, by presenting a cultural extravaganza of Kalki's select works in Music and Dance styles, on 15th June 1999 at the Shanmukhananda Hall. Tributes to Kalki were paid by a distinguished panel headed by Sri R. Venkataraman, former President of India. (A Report of this appears in Kinnari's "Cultural Scene in Mumbai".)

From the Archives

"Shakespeare of Music"

Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827), the greatest artist-musician and composer for all times passed away at a quarter to six p.m. on the 26th of March 1827 during a thunderstorm and was buried at the Wahringer Friedhof outside Vienna. He was born in 1770 at Bonn, then one of the most important cities on the lower Rhine. He was barely 57 when he bade adieu to this world, which he used as a sonorous lyre in order to evoke the sublimest songs of Joy and Sorrow and the richest harmonies of Love and Death, winning the proud title, Beethoven-the "Shakespeare of Music".

Beethoven inherited the gift of music from his grandfather Louis Van Beethoven, a tenor, who became a court musician to the resident Archbishop-Elector, and his father Johann, who was also a singer in the Elector's employ.

Johann realising that his son Ludwig had been born with uncommon musical talent, had the child begin to study violin and piano very early with the idea of putting him forward as a prodigy as Mozart's father had done. But the young Ludwig was less precocious than Mozart and rebelled strenuously against the enforced training. However he did appear at a concert in 1778. So strong was the boy's musical gift that it triumphed over every obstacle including his own childish reluctance and the Elector thought it worthwhile to send him to Vienna, then the musical capital of Europe. He had been composing now for several years and Haydn accepted him as a pupil in counter-point, an arrangement that did not turn out altogether to Beethoven's satisfaction.

He studied with other teachers Schenck, Salieri and Albrechtsberger and Schuppanizigh in Vienna and in March 1795, made his first public appearance as Virtuoso and composer in the city, playing his own piano concerto in 'B' Flat

Major. This date marks the beginning of a kind of recognition that could only spur the young composer on to the activity that in a nature so vigorous and energetic meant enthusiastic creation. Of course he wanted to write a symphony. His First Symphony was presented at a concert given in Vienna in 1800. It was an instant success and within a few months carried the composer's fame all over Germany. In the musical city of Leipzig, it was described as "intellectual, powerful and difficult."

Beethoven had settled permanently in Vienna in the autumn of 1792 and the body of his work originated, of course, in the Austrian capital. There was a quantity of piano music in this period, largely in the form of variations, a number of songs and several arias, odds and ends of chamber music, dances, marches etc. Some of the variations for piano and strings are based on melodies of Handel, Mozart and a number of lesser lights. During his Bonn days, he had composed a score for a *Knightly Ballet* performed by members of the Bonn aristocracy. Prior to this ballet, he wrote the ballet '*Creatures of Prometheus*' to a scenario by the noted dancer-Salvatore Vigano of Vienna. Most notable of his vocal compositions are '*An die ferne Gelibte*' and '*Die Ehre Gottes ausder Natur*', in the province of solo song. In 1790 he composed his genuine Cantata on the death of the Emperor Joseph II. Altogether he wrote five Piano Concertos and nine Symphonies.

He composed his Second Symphony when he was seriously affected with deafness. His deafness reached such a culminating point that on medical advice, he decided to spend the summer of 1802 in the village of Heiligenstadt. It was a tragic summer for Beethoven as he would have probably taken his own life but for his determination to consecrate himself with new courage to his art. His life was further complicated by a

love affair with the youthful Countess Giulietta Guicciardi. Ultimately she married Count Gallenberg to the disappointment of Beethoven. In such deplorable circumstances, Beethoven undertook his Second Symphony, which reflects his tragedy here and there and in a richer romanticism than his earlier creation.

The *Allegro con brio* that follows, starts with a buoyant theme which sets the pace for an energetic and cheerful movement. This has been called one of the most luxurious slow movements in the world and its richness, melodies have been set down as 'reckless'. In amplitude and opulence, no previous symphonic movement had ever approached even the initial *allegro con brio*. "It is a curious paradox that he abandoned the phase of pianoforte compositions early in life due to his growing deafness, the consequent impossibility of his appearance as performing virtuoso, the circumstances that his intellect outgrew the expressive capacity of the Piano and the immense broadening and deepening of his creative faculties which demanded subtler and more ramified channels of expression."

Nevertheless, the tremendous series of 32 Sonatas which began in 1795 and continued more or less intermittently till 1822 are among the most moving, gracious, original, adventurous and completely extraordinary achievements. Within the cosmic limits of this stupendous succession of sonatas, viz; *the Pathetique, Pastoral, Moonlight* etc., there stretches a whole world of emotional experience and an incalculable diversity of invention. He has written Nine Symphonies. If his famous works are these symphonies, his chamber music represents the most far reaching diversified, profound, original, spiritualised and at the same time the most problematic manifestations of his genius. In his stringed quartets dwell the germs of more or less everything out of which subsequent music has in one way or other had developed. If Beethoven may be called the "musician of the future", it is by reason of his sixteen string quartets. Between 1799 and 1802, he wrote eight of his Sonatas for violin and piano. The most famous of these is his fifth-the

'*Spring Sonata*, which opens with a theme of lovely grace and has an adorable serenity throughout its four movements.

India and Beethoven

In 1808, the famous Austrian Orientalist, Hammer-Purgstall, the founder of a Journal *Fundgruben does Orient'* returned to Vienna from Asia. Beethoven was then in Vienna in the plenitude of his genius and glory. It was the time when he produced his symphony in *Ut Minor* and the *Pastoral*. Beethoven entered into relation with Hammer and wanted to have a happy talk on Indian music. But somehow it did not materialise. Later he seemed to have been more attracted by the religious thoughts of India. We find in his letters and notes (1809--16) traces of assiduous studies and translations of Hammer. It is really worthy of note - the passionate attraction of a European genius to the philosophic thoughts of Asia.

Beethoven was the precursor of Burnouf and Bopp, of Goethe and Schopenhauer, so far as the discovery of Indian genius was concerned. Beethoven towards the end of his life came to possess a mystical apprehension of life. It is probable that this mystical outlook would have been more recalcitrant in his case. He believed in an ultimate, benign and intelligent power, and that the existence was planned and purposeful. He took down copious notes from *Eastern Literature*, especially from the *Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita*, fourth or fifth act of *Shakuntala*.

For e.g.

"I am that which is. I am all that was, that is, and that shall be";

Copied and kept permanently framed on his desk.

Soul of Beethoven

The fragments of the above Indian religious texts which were found amongst his manuscripts are primarily translations and partly adaptations of the sublime philosophies containing the quintessence of Hindu spiritual realisations. We find in the texts not only selections of the original Hindu thought, melodies, but the very improvi-

sations on them by some master spirit who is like Beethoven, deeply religious and hence a cousin-germain of the Hindu seers, who were also musicians from the very beginning-who called their scriptures Rik and Chandas and who are responsible for the apotheosis of the musical sound; SABDA BRAHMAM.

Every biographer asserts that Beethoven's life and art are deeply surcharged with religious inspiration. A more deeply religious mind never existed. God was to him the most solemn and intimate Reality when he saw and welcomed through all aspects of Nature; and in every mood of joy and sorrow. Truly Beethoven has created joy out of misery. Those who have the privilege to listen even to the Homeric compositions of the musical world-the Ninth Symphony, which Beethoven created out of the depth of his soul-the war-theatre of joy and sorrow, can understand the profound truth of Mon: Rolland's words. In the year 1823, he wrote a musical superstructure to Chiller's *Ode of Joy* which would ever remain as a marvel and a despair of musical art.

All his (Beethoven's) life may be compared to a day of terrific storm. At the beginning, a limpid youthful morning-only here and there a gust of weariness. But in the immobile atmosphere one scents a secret menace, a presentiment. Suddenly we find the passing of gigantic shadows, the tragic rumblings, the terrible and growling silences-the furious rush of Storm in the *Heroic* and in the Symphony of *Ut. Minor*. However, the transparent purity of air is not as yet blotted out. Joy is still joy and Sorrow nurses always the Child of Hope. But after 1810, the equilibrium of the soul is upset. His majesty of soul gave its own nobility to his music, while his force and vision democratised and liberated it, making it serve all times, all places, and all peoples.

Nevertheless, he remained a bachelor and when he took his brother's son Karl under his care, he dismissed for ever the thought of marriage. The despair he succumbed to, partly on account of his physical ailment and partly to the misbehaviour of his nephew, is recorded in his

diary and in the *Heiligenstadt Testament*, a letter to his brother that is heartbreaking. He found the art of music narrowed to the pastime of a special class of society. He made it broadly human-or superhuman. He took the Sonata, Symphony and Concerto consolidated in form by C. P.E. Bach, Haydn, and Mozart and transmuted them into "grandiose, great and mad music" - of unprecedented scope and variety. He emphasised self-expression, the warm personal note presaged by Bach and Mozart. He made the piano and symphony orchestra more expressive than before. When rules interfered with free and beautiful sound, he changed the rules. A revolutionary who created faster than he destroyed, a democrat in the true sense, he is the touchstone by which others are evaluated.

The End

Beethoven accosted his brother's son in the autumn of 1826 with a view to finding a suitable asylum for him. The attempt was not a success. Beethoven was morose and his nephew was irked by the restraints imposed upon him. Owing to the exposure on the way, Beethoven arrived ill. During his illness he passed much time in reading Handel, for whom he had a special liking. The end came some time after five o' clock on the afternoon of March, 26, 1827. It took more than one disease to kill this Titan. He had an attack of dropsy, jaundice, and cholera complicated by pneumonia. There had been a violent storm, and suddenly there was a lightning flash and a great crash of thunder. It seems to have aroused the dying man from his unconsciousness. His death struggles were violent. He raised the clenched fist, opened his eyes and looked upwards for several seconds with a "very serious threatening expression". As the hand dropped he fell back dead. As Beethoven was penniless excepting his Bank-drafts, he applied for financial help to the Philharmonic Society London. The society supplied him one hundred pounds free which sum was utilised later for his funeral expenses.

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From the Archives

Beethoven and His Music

By Dr. J. N. Guha

In the musical world Beethoven is as much a genius as Shakespeare and Leonardo da Vinci are in the domains of literature and art. I do not think any other composer has ever reached such prolific heights, no, not even Brahms or Wagner as Beethoven has in his incomparable sonatas, symphonies, and later quartets. In fact, it can be rightly stressed that had there been no Beethoven the world would never have had Brahms and Wagner. The latter are so much steeped in the spirit of Beethoven that Wagner had even been heard to remark, "If one studies Beethoven's ninth symphony meticulously in all its aspects, one is bound to learn everything that is in music". Besides it is a well-known fact that Brahms' first symphony was hailed by everyone as Beethoven's tenth.

Beethoven's Genius

The reason of Beethoven's greatness lies in his independence of mind and spirit. Beethoven, in his earlier compositions, followed the same classical style of Mozart and Haydn-one has only to hear his first symphony and first piano concerto to confirm it. At the first hearing, it is very difficult to differentiate them from any similar works of Haydn and Mozart although, I must say, both the works distinctly bear the masterly stamp of Beethoven. His fifth symphony stands out as a landmark in the symphonic world. For the first time a symphony that didnot adhere completely to the age-old traditional style and forms of classical works was composed. All his subsequent works show definite signs of the romantic element, which greatly influenced the later generation of musicians. In other words, Beethoven was dynamic and versatile and never hesitated to adopt new and revolutionary methods.

In all, Beethoven composed nine symphonies, five piano concertos, a good number of

music. sonatas for solo pianoforte, overtures, and chamber music. The most popular symphonies of Beethoven are the third, fifth, sixth (pastoral), seventh and ninth (choral). The last one is very seldom performed as it requires a large orchestra along with a trained chorus to sing the finale, Schiller's poem. "Ode to Joy". Wagner asserts that never in his life-time had he heard a faultless performance of the ninth, which is indeed a giant among symphonies. The recording of this work by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra is anything but satisfactory.

Symphony of Victory

The fifth symphony is of course well-known to the present generation for its majestic opening bars, which represent the symbol of victory over tyranny. In the third movement, grand 'approaches' by the Cellos and Double Basses very appropriately reminded Berlioz, the great French composer and music-critic, of the gambolling of elephants." The sixth (pastrol) is the first of its kind to depict nature in its different phases. There are divergent views on the Pastrol being played with animation in Walt Disney's "Fantasia". Personally, I thought it was grand. The seventh shows the master in his dominantly gay mood and Wagner aptly calls it "the apotheosis of dance." Of the eighth, Beethoven used to call it "my little symphony." There is an episode on his third (Eroica), After the French Revolution, Napoleon's rise to power infused great hopes in the masses of Europe but alas! he turned out to be a dictator. Beethoven originally dedicated his third to this saviour of mankind but when the French army besieged Vienna, where Beethoven had been living then, he tore off the score and re-wrote it, adding a funeral march as one of the movements. All the above symphonies are brilliantly recorded by H. M. V. under the inimitable condutorship of Arturo Toscanini.

Piano Concertos and Sonatas

Among his piano concertos, the favourite are the fourth and fifth (Emperor). The last one-it surely can be called "Emperor" for its majestic movements. It has been brilliantly recorded by both Artur Schnabel and Walter Gieseking. The fourth could be heard on records played by the eminent pianist, Wilhelm Backhaus. Beethoven's first concerto is also a favourite piece with music-lovers, but as I said before, definitely Mozartian in style.

Beethoven composed a lot of sonatas for pianoforte. He himself was an expert virtuoso pianist and therefore his music for pianoforte is always grand and inspiring. His famous sonatas are as follows :

'*Pathetique*', '*Appassionata*', '*Hammerklavier*', '*Wakistein*', '*Moonlight*' and a host of others. The finest slow movement of all musical works is, I think, the Andante from '*Hammerklavier*'. Geisking's recording of this is worth collecting, while Edwin Fischer interprets the rest very efficiently.

Besides these piano sonatas, there are sonatas for violin and piano and for cello and piano. The most notable one is "*Kreutzer*" a sonata for violin and piano, skilful interpretation of which is given by that virtuoso violinists, Yehudi Menuhin and his sister, Hephziba. One of the finest chamber music pieces ever composed is "*Archduke*" Trio by Beethoven. Brilliant recording of it has been done, the players being Solomon (Piano), Holst (Violin), Pini (Cello). It is in no way inferior to its previous rendering by Cortot, Thiband, and Cassals.

His Masterpieces

Beethoven's quartets, composed in his later years when he had attained spiritual upliftment-are masterpieces of highest order. Even the most musically-inclined find it rather difficult to comprehend them at first hearing. In one of the Brains Trust Sessions of B.B.C., a question was put to this effect, "What would you like to have, if you are stranded in a lonely Island in a remote

corner of the globe?" Dr. C. E. M. Joad, the philosopher, answered "Beethoven's later Quartets." This is the highest tribute, I think, one can pay this sublime music of celestial beauty. Likewise, Beethoven's *Mass in D Minor* shall be always considered the most heavenly music of this kind ever composed.

Last but not the least mention of Beethoven's grand and majestic overtures must be made. The most prominent of these are : *Leonara I, II, III, Egmont Coriolanus, Prometheus, Ruins of Athens etc.*

Leonara No. III, according to Sir Charles Grove, the erudite music-critic, is the quintessence of all music, and is a piece more perfectly composed than any other. And we are given a superb recording of it by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter.

Beethoven's Life-sketch

Ludwig Van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Rhine land, of a Dutch father and a German mother. He showed aptitude for music from his childhood and was initially trained by his father and the local musicians. Then he was, brought to Vienna, the hub of the musical activity. In those days, when very young. Mozart was then at the peak of his fame. When he heard Beethoven for the first time playing a piece of his own music, he embraced him and publicly kissed him on both cheeks and prophesied that the young boy was the budding Prophet of the musical world. Mozart's words were not uttered in vain-Beethoven did become the Prophet in the art of music.

For the best part of his life, Beethoven lived in Vienna. He was mostly poor except in the last period of his life, when he had a few years of comparative comfort. He had among his friends a few of the then European nobility, such as, Kreutzer, Waldstein, etc., to whom he dedicated some of his works. Beethoven's contemporary was another Great man, Goethe and their meeting is still regarded as one of the great historic events of the world.

Beethoven's love-life was not successful. It is a fact that he fell in love with three ladies but each time, his love was turned down. The C sharp minor sonata, so commonly known as '*Moonlight*', was composed when Beethoven was under the influence of violent love -it is not very difficult to believe the authenticity of this episode, particularly when one hears the serenely slow movement with which the sonata opens.

It is easy to divide Beethoven's life into three stages, of which the middle part is very rich with the finest music ever written by him or for that matter any other composer.

The greatest tragedy of Beethoven's life was that he gradually and completely became deaf. It prevented him from listening to his own compositions composed at the full height of his genius. At the first public performance of his immortal masterpiece the ninth symphony (choral), Beethoven was present. With the last bar of music, the whole house rose to offer the master its tumultuous cheers, but alas! he did not even know that the symphony was finished. Then

when he was told of the vociferous joy and thunderous applause of the audience, he rose from his seat to acknowledge their greetings. Such is the irony of fate.

It has been argued that Beethoven's slow movements are so serenely beautiful, yet so full of pathos, that only he, being so sad and disappointed in life, could have written such music. Against this contention, Emil Ludwig, the distinguished Critic of music, says in the preface of his book, entitled *Beethoven*, "It is true Beethoven was sad at heart and his slow movements only too clearly reflect this. But he never let himself succumb to this slow-down feeling as one finds in all his third or final movements when he always emerged victorious."

That was Beethoven, the conqueror. Throughout his life he fought his adverse fate squarely and always came out with his head held high. Like Shakespeare and Leonardo da Vinci, his contributions will for ever bring forth joy and solace to the human race.

- Courtesy : "Modern Review" (1946)

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Music for the Body and Soul

The magic of music never ceases to amaze either those who pursue it as an art or those who seek to derive entertainment or thrill, pleasure or relaxation from it. While each of these feelings are extremely subjective, some kind of scientific analysis has been made possible on the effect of music in providing relaxation to the mind and body.

Recent studies in the US, conducted by a group of researchers at the Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, revealed that music can be used to reduce pain and speed up the healing process in patients. This study was specifically undertaken on 500 patients who underwent abdominal surgery over a period of 29 months. They were divided into two groups, with the former put under music and relaxation therapy, while the latter was given the usual post-operative care, comprising medication-induced rest. The patients in the first group reported significantly less pain as compared to the second group. Besides, there were no side effects.

Music therapy is not really a new science. It dates back to ancient Greece, where Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle described the prophylactic and cathartic powers of music. Even the Bible mentions the use of music in treating illness.

Why talk about the West? In our own country, music has been recognised as an effective means of therapy by our forefathers. Some of the passionate outpourings of the Trinity of Carnatic music are purported to have cured people of illness. Tyagaraja's *Naajeevadhara* in Bilahari, it is believed, brought a dead person back to life. A host of other composers including Dikshitar and Syama Sastri, have used music as a medium to pray for good health.

In recent times, we have several individuals and institutions doing intensive studies in this direction. Kunnakkudi Vaidyanathan, the famous violinist and director of the Chennai-based Raga Research Centre has studied the therapeutic effects of specific Ragas. According to him, Raga Anandabhairavi helps relieve hypertension while

Raga Sankarabharanam is useful for the mentally ill. Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna is working on some Ragas that are supposed to have the healing touch. Yet another person, Sri Ganapathi Sachidananda Swami of Myosre believes that music soothes the 72,000 nerves and the 14 Nadis in our body. Sriram Bharati, a Chennai-based therapist, practices a unique form of sound and herbal therapy called "Ariyar-sevai" where he enacts therapeutic songs traditionally sung in the temples by the Ariyars, the chief temple singers. Doctors, hospitals and institutions are increasingly seeking music as a means of therapy.

The greatest advantage in using music therapy is that it can be used regardless of age, ailment, disability or musical background. It has brought about positive results in curing a wide variety of problems ranging from child birth, stress management, physical/mental handicaps/disturbances, learning disabilities, pain management to de-addiction of alcohol/drug abusers. It has also been scientifically proved that singing helps people with speech impediments and improve their articulation, rhythm and breath control. And playing any instrument helps improve motor coordination. Of course, remembering lyrics and tunes are good memory training.

This is not to imply that a layman cannot benefit from this form of therapy. As already mentioned, this can be used irrespective of musical background/knowledge. Why, just listening to good music can stimulate thought or relax the mind.

However, one should remember, that even this is very subjective. There is no guaranteeing that a particular type of music will affect everyone the same way. And one should remember to distinguish between sound and noise! The latter may even prove counter-productive and one may end up with more problems than one started with!

Kiranaivali Vidyasankar

Cultural Scene in Mumbai

SHOWERS OF SANGEETAM

Call it a coincidence or whatever you will, showers of melody rained in the Shanmukhananda Hall while there was a down-pour outside. Summer showers in the month of May !!

True to expectations T.V. Sankaranarayanan sang to his heart's fill drenching the listeners too with the showers of Sangeetham at times with roaring sound pictures, at others with a deluge of Swaraprastharas. An adept in exploring rare gems from Vaggeyakaras' treasure TVS this time too enlivened the concert and delighted the audience with pieces not much in vogue and some perhaps fresh introductions.

Commencing with an improvisatory mood he invoked Lore Ganesha with a Viruththam *Vinayakane Potri* in Hamsadhwani followed by Tyagaraja's *Sri Raghukula* and tagged with a profusion of Swaras. The very opening projected his mood for an evening of melodic feast.

Chakravakam in a Raga mould took some time to register but Papanasam Sivan's *Guruvayurappa* was really a rare treat.

TVS's take-off points of Raga Alapana are never the same. He uses various note-pads to take-off giving a Raga an image of varied hues and evocations. A 'dheerga' (elongated) Dhaivata used to be the launch-pad for Lathangi some-time back, this time it was a sober Gandhara with a very conventional touch and flowed Lathangi eloquent and elegant, though at times open-throated. Another Sivan's *Venkataramana* with Niraval-Swaras at *Alarmel Mangai Manala* was excellent but why the winding up sequence *Ramana, Ramana, Ramana* and the glide down the scale in the fashion of Hindustani musicians concluding a piece ! If anything the gimmick erased the pleasant image evoked.

After Dikshitar's *Sri Mathrubutham* (Kannada), the open-throated Hindolam had

Malkaunsish delineation, employing many a 'Meend' phrasings and he threw a surprise rendering an-old-time hit *Padmanabhapahi* of Swati Tirunal.

The elaborate Kambhoji with exquisite spinning of phrases and his usual zest and gusto was enjoyable as such quality Alapanas are rare to come by these days. The composition was again a fresh-find: *Kandan Enra Peyaril Karunai Vellam nee, Kanakkidaikkumo - Erezhulagil*. The Niraval stance *Pannagai Mugam Arilum Arulvaram Tedi Vanden Pannaga Shayanan Maruga Muruga Guha*, was an evocative one and TVS made an essay of poignant plea.

The Mridangam - Ghatam Thani with Mannargudi Easwaran and H. Sivaramakrishnan had a unique Nadai that blended so well with the song rendered and played with such rapport, anticipation and reciprocation leaving not a bit of stroke to chance. In its intricate sojourn the Thani was so engaging and engrossing.

RTP after such a "Ghana" number was dwarfed in size though not in substance. The romantic Kapi was explored on emotive plane and a Sarvalaghu Pallavi, *Sri Rama Jayarama Jaya Jaya Rama, Sringara Rama* was woven in Khanda Triputa. TVS is known for his Sarvalaghu swaraprastharas and a crisp Vandana Dharini and Sindhu Bhairavi were strung to the Pallavi.

TVS became a bit too emotional singing Hari Namas such as *Sringa Hari, Narasimha Hari, Lakshmi Hari, Narayana Hari* etc., as a Virutta prelude to Dr. V. V. Srivatsa's *Tirupathi Vasa Namostute* (Hamasanandi).

The next in line of Shanmukhananda's presentation was Kalidasa's *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* in a dance-drama in Bharata Nrityam by Jayashree Rajagopalan's Nrityodaya (Bombay). A disciple of Dr. Padma Subramaniam, Jayashree has been propagating in this metropolis Bharata Nrityam, a style based on the Karanas.

The two-hour ballet was presented at one stretch with no interval. A scoring point. And in that duration she presented the story of Dushyanta and Sakuntala leaving certain things to the imagination of the audience who are not strangers to the story.

A few Karanas and more flowing dance movements with emphasis on Vachikabhinaya and music was in brief the highlight of the production. Flowing movements and thematic presentations are 'in-thing' today where solos are becoming rare and group dance and ballet presentations are gaining popularity.

Doing a full-fledged ballet with a few senior students is not an easy task and the style of Bharata Nrityam is not everyone's cup of tea. Over and above to train a troupe of varied age-groups in a fully dance-based presentation would be a herculean task. With imagination, taking into consideration the talent in hand, Jayashree has choreographed *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* giving greater weightage to music and spoken words (roughly vachikabhinaya).

The wings, no doubt, stole the show. Musical choreography, if one may use the word, was highly imaginative with blend of well-chosen Ragas, fine-tuned music and commendable conducting. Young Vaishnavi Rajagopalan (Jayashree's daughter) was quiet at ease wielding cymbals and singing. The support by Gayathri Sundaresan now and then was good enough. While Vivek Rajagopal, another youngster - gave solid support but with soft strokes and inspiring rhythmic on Mridangam; the rest of the orchestra added its mite to boost music.

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Kalki's Birth Centenary

Four organisations - Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir, The South Indian Education Society and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

- joined together to celebrate Kalki's Birth centenary. It was a memorable event that took place on 15th June, 1999 at the Shanmukhananda Hall.

Highlighting 'Kalki' Krishnamoorthy's immortal songs and works there were musical sessions and dance presentations. Invoking Lord Ganesha through Tyagaraja's *Sri Ganapathini* (Sourashtram) Alamelu Mani moulded Kalki's *Vandadum Solaidanile* (Harikambhoji) in a mini-concert suite with Alapana, Niraval and Swarasprastharas.

Anandi Ramachandran and Vijaya Rajendran (daughter and daughter-in-law of Kalki) paid their pranams rendering father's *Poonkuyil Koovum Pooncholaiyil Orunal* (Kapi) once made popular by M. S. Subbulakshmi.

A. Hariharan regaled the audience with Kothamangalam Subbu's poem. On audience request he presented a Ghazal too.

With synchrony and symmetry a bevy of dancers invoked deities - Ganesha, Karthikeya, Krishna and Shakti capping with sizzling Tillana.

The finale of the cultural segment was a dance exposition of extracts from Kalki's historical novel *Sivakamiyin Sapatham*, choreographed by Guru Kalyanasundaram and presented by Vani Ganapathy. The sequences reflected the cultural eminence during Pallava dynasty - in art, architecture and socio-religious milieu. The dance in a nutshell captured the deep devotion of a dancer, Sivakami, her short-lived romance with the Pallava prince, her ultimate renunciation and surrender to the Lord. Vani lived up to her reputation bringing out the varied emotions Sivakami underwent.

Equally absorbing were the speeches by veterans associated with Kalki in one way or the other. While Atomic Energy Chairman Dr. Chidambaram hailed Kalki as a supreme nationalist, the LIC Chairman G. Krishnamurthy, a Tamil scholar, went into an intellectual exploration of Kalki's songs and works. Just a sample of his

analysis: Kalki's *Malaipozhudinile Oru Naal Malarpozhinile*, (a song that has been danced and sung any number of times), the speaker said, contained the munificence of the Tamil's culture, their religious perception, poetic genius and social culture. Yes, one certainly agrees with him that Kalki was like "a vast ocean and one could only admire at this vastness with awe and reverence, standing on the shores".

The Chief Guest of the evening, Shri R. Venkataraman, former President of India, was nostalgic and went down memory lane. He reminisced many a splendid qualities of Kalki. The most outstanding was the release of Tamil language from the shackles of archaic antiquity and making it to that of spoken simplicity. What a tremendous change it brought in the absorption of Tamil language and literature, he exclaimed.

Sangeetha Kalanidhi Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, in his inimitable "Alapana of speech" stole the thunder. He was as felicitous in his speech as he has been in music. Little wonder that audience felt that he could have been allowed some more time to continue his "Kalki Alapana". Calling Kalki his Sishya in "Rummy", Semmangudi highlighted Kalki's power of pen, humour as his weapon, as an art critic, a writer, a litterateur and as a person.

In his brief reply Rajendran (Kalki's son) touched upon Kalki's humour recalling an episode.

Once S. S. Vasana and Kalki went on a tour of South India. In their sojourn they were very much impressed by Tipu Sultan's Tomb at Srirangapatnam. Asked Vasana of Kalki if he could write something humorous about it.

Pat came Kalki's reply: "The tomb is so beautiful. It is unfortunate that Tipu Sultan is not there to see it!"

"So do I feel too. How I wish my father were here today to see such a grand celebration!" concluded Rajendran.

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Shanmukhananda's ninth Talent Promotion Festival (TPF) opened on 5th June, 1999 with a Saxophone recital by Vedamurthi. Though not a young talent waiting at wings for promotion, it was consideration for the few 'takers' of this Western instrument that impelled the Sabha to include the artiste in the series. And it is quite a common knowledge that Saxophone has gained an entry to the "Mangala Vadya" group and often figures in weddings of this metropolis.

It needs no reiteration that Saxophone's voluminous tone has limited range and the hazards to harness it to the subtle Gamaka nuances of Karnatak music are far too many. If in spite of this Kadri Gopalnath has 'tamed' it to concert Paddhati, it only speaks of his genius. Yet in uniquely Karnatak Ragas with elusive nuances like Ananda Bhairavi, Todi etc., he still has to manipulate a lot to get at the exact feel of the Ragas. Little wonder there are hardly a few players of this pipe. Moreover Saxophone is an open-air instrument like Nagaswaram.

It was bold and courageous of Vedamurthi, a Nagaswara player, to have opted for this instrument and played at the cosy Jasubhai Convention Hall. As a Mangala Vadyam inaugurating the TPF it was welcome. And he has acquired a soft blowing technique, maintaining perfect alignment with sruti. Also his sense of rhythm was commendable.

What was however embarrassing to the listeners was his sense of Ragas, his approach to and application of Gamakas which breath life into the Ragas. Ragas in Karnatak music have clear identity and individuality and one needs to train in it perfectly well before going onto public platform. There is no short-cut to reaching a Raga. Meandering through allied alleys are not only detrimental but casts blemish to the very soul of the Raga.

One felt very uneasy when the artiste took up Alapanas. Brief though they shook at their roots, identifying the Ragas took some time as the takeoff phrases, and first developing sketches

brought in allied hues. At stages it was the compositions which identified the Ragas. For instance, opening with a touch of Hindolam, sensing through Manirangu the artiste reached somewhere near Sri Raga. And once *Endaro Mahanubhavulu* took off both the artiste and audience felt at ease.

Where he was not sure of his 'Ri'-s and 'Ga'-s Ragas were shaken in their identities. One was not sure whether he was calling the notes of Abheri or Suddha Dhanyasi until he settled down to *Nagumomu*. In a style so simple, with Gamakas few and far between, he chose compositions of orchestral nature.

Kapi, Arabhi too were no different. The concert had two percussion support - Thavil by Selvaratnam and Mridangam by Vivek Rajagopal. Thavil though by nature loud was rhythmically good and young Vivek Rajagopal excelled, with soft, intricate strokes and variations. The 'sollus' of the two percussions in their dialogue of Korvais and Theermanams blended well. An enjoyable phase in the concert.

The following day was youngsters' day. It was a commendable gesture of T. R. Balamani's disciple Savitha Krishnan to rise up to the occasion and step in as a substitute in a day's notice. And she showed talent worth nurturing. A sweet high-pitched voice, well-honed to classical music is her asset, and concertising comes natural to her.

Fluency marked her 90-minute concert. No hassles or hesitation. All clearly tailored. A few pauses and punctuations, a long karvai as her voice could well stay on sruthi, would have enhanced the beauty of her delineations. For instance, her Bilahari which was one stretch of delineation in fast phase was acceptable in the early phase of a concert following a Varnam (Pantavarali) and *Vathapi Ganapatiye* (Sahana), but she could have dwelt in some Vilamba phrasings as the Kriti she rendered was Dikshitar's *Sri Madhurapuri Viharini*. Her Swaras had, good 'Kalpana'.

Hemavathi as a main Raga was a good choice. And the delineation was done with certain ease. While Prati Madhyama easily fascinates one, its elusive Madhyama has to be carefully woven into the Raga fabric or else many a skein would resemble its Suddha Madhyama equivalent. Youngsters today in general require to assimilate more indepth about the salient phrases (called Pidis) of such Ragas. Savitha has talent and with intense training, Sadhaka and study of musical nuances should progress in her chosen field.

Sridhar Parthasarathy's was a mature accompaniment, quite inspiring at times, on Mridangam. Anand Vishwanath (Violin) was amiable and is capable of much more quality Sangat.

One feels a bit embarrassed to comment on a concert that is premature. Smita Madhav's Vocal earlier was a 'classroom' music tailored to concert form. She has good voice, her Telugu diction is naturally precise as she hails from Andhra Pradesh. But heir patanthara, and plain-coated singing required much pruning. She could have trained and honed her voice to the aesthetics of classical singing before coming onto performing circuit.

Kasi Visalakshi, a disciple of Mysore Doreswamy Iyengar, from Bangalore gave a fine 90-minute Veena recital. A deflected style and good fingering Visalakshi played an impressive "*Sri Maha Ganapathim Bhajeham* (Atana), *Paramatmudu* (Vagadeeswari) *Anudinamunu* (Begada), *Simhendra Madhyamam* in RTP suite, Niroshtha and Senchuriti Tillana. Of Alapanas. Begada and Simhendramadhyamam spoke of her grooming and well-designed build-up. Kriti and Pallavi and Swaras were good. She needs to be careful about her Prati Madhyama. And for an artiste who has mastered the deflected style what was the need to stick to notation in compositions? Without proper Sahitya-intonation *Paramatmudu* at places suffered on account of this. Plain-playing of notation robbed Seshanna's Senchuruti Tillana of its Jathi lilt and graceful get-up.

Narayanamurthy is one more Mridangist in the concert circuit who plays soft and sweet. His support to a larger extent enhanced the quality and audibility of Veena presentation.

- KINNARI

Music Triangle felicitated Sri P. N. Krishnamoorthy, musician, musicologist and teacher, on 5-6-99, followed by his concert. PNK, as he is popularly known, learnt music first under his father Sri Neelakanta Iyer, and later under his paternal uncle and the well-known Guru of Mumbai, late Sangeetha Bhushanam Pallavur Mani Iyer. He is an accomplished scientist and administrator (Retd.) of the Dept. of Atomic Energy. However, music has always been and continues to be his first love.

As a well known music critic, writing under the pen-names of VIVADI and NARADA, he has to his credit innumerable articles and reviews published in leading journals and newspapers of Mumbai and Chennai.

Students and rasikas admire his innovative methods of teaching Karnatak music and his versatility as a musicologist. PNK's lec-dems have always been a big draw.

He is the President of Bhakta Rasika Ranjani Sabha since 1979 and has devoted his life to Carnatic music - for its study and propagation.

Being an old - timer, PNK had everything solid to offer in his concert. The concert format was traditional, which included an RTP (a rarity nowadays); the choice of Ragas stressed on 'Raktitvam' with very few minor Ragas and the concert duration a full 3 1/2 hrs.

All this brought to fore, his musical acumen, inherited from his Gurus and his ability, to transcribe music ideas assimilated by him, on account of his vast listening experience.

Violin accompaniment was provided by Madhavan and Mridangam by Sankaranarayanan.

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The first anniversary of late Sri Tiruchi Swaminatha Iyer was observed by his disciples on 27-6-99 in Mumbai, through Gananjali. "Guru Smarana Day", it was named and will probably become an annual event. Shri Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, a senior teacher and respected member of the music community in Mumbai, was the Chief Guest. He recalled his association with Swaminatha Iyer since 1948. He said Swaminatha Iyer was a Maha Vidwan, who excelled in Chouka Kala renderings; he was a sincere teacher, and gave a lot of encouragement to beginners.

Two of Swaminatha Iyer's prime disciples - Sri T. S. Anantharama Bhagavathar and Sri G. Balasubramaniam, gave recitals, accompanied on the violin by Sri K. Shivakumar, another senior disciple of the late Guru.

Mentionworthy is the Kriti (given below) rendered by Sri G. Balasubramaniam, composed by the Guru, in Chakravaham, set to Rupakam..

Incidentally or intentionally, one does not know, the same night, in the Ragasudha Programme aired on AIR FM (Bombay), one heard a concert by the Maha Vidwan played from the AIR Archives. This reporter felt very happy on hearing the programme, which was definitely a fitting tribute and a grand finale to such a memorable day.

On recalling, all that one heard earlier on at the function as told by the speakers, one could feel and visualise the great man the master was, and undoubtedly the great musician that he also was.

Ragam: Chakravakam **Talam**: Rupakam

Pallavi: Sumukham Ganamayakam

Sumati Pradam Namami Sada II

Anupallavi: Amarendra Vinuta pada

Ambikasutam Agrajam II

Charanam: Lambekruta Nasikaya Hamsayogam

Upatichantam

Om Ityekaksharapada Bodhakandam Ekadantam

Ambuja Karadritangusena Kanditadruta Pasabandham

Madhyama Kala Sahityam: Sambu Kumaram Kapilam
Sharavanabhava priya sodaram - Priyakara Sodaram II

- G.S & V.V

Tala Vadyothsav

(The 18th Talavadyothsav 1999 of Percussive Arts Centre, Birth Centenaries of Musiri Subramanya Iyer, B. Devendrappa, D. Annaswami Bhagavathar, Tanjore Ramadoss Rao and Umayalpuram Kodandarama Iyer- held at Sri Shivarathreeshwara Kendra J. S. S. Campus, Bangalore under joint auspices of Percussive Arts Centre and J. S. S. Sangeetha Sabha, Mysore, from 27th to 30th May 1999, and at Chowdaiah Memorial Hall on 31st May 1999.)

Suthur Mutt of Mysore District has been rendering great service to society in addition to religious activities. The Mutt is well known for Vidyadhana and Annadhana and also for support to Art, Literature, Music and Culture. Jagadguru Dr. Sri Shivarathreeshwara Rajendra Swamy who is the President of J. S. S. Sabha have been conducting regular Music festivals and Music conferences. This year the annual Talavadyothsav was held under the benediction of the Swamiji.

The celebrations commenced with a Poorna Kumbha Swagatha on 27-5-1999. The inaugural session commenced with a Veda Ghosha by Phalachandra and Parthasarathy, prayer by Kum. Shruthi and Roopa. M. R. Doraiswamy Iyengar, Chairman, Reception Committee, welcomed the gathering and Bangalore K. Venkataram presented a brief report detailing the contents of the festival. His Holiness lighted the lamp along with Dr. Raja Ramanna, Justice Nittoor Sreenivasa Rau, Vidwan V. V. Ranganathan and Dr. A. H. Rama Rao. An Abhinandana Pathra was read by Padma Gurudutt and a Birudu Pathra was read by N. R. Harini. The title "Laya Kalaa Nipuna" was conferred on veteran Mridangam and Khanjari Vidwan V. V. Ranganathan by the Swamiji. Vidwans S. Shankar and D. Balakrishna were conferred the titles "Sangeetha Kala Prathibhamani" and Vidwan M. T. Rajakesari was conferred the title "Laya Kala Prathibhamani".

The Swamiji in his inaugural address referred to the essential necessity of Music to manhood. Man gets reformed by Music. He complemented arts and opined that Tala vadyas are essential for a proper appreciation of the Art of Music. He also observed that Indian Music

has retained its individuality, despite the onslaught of Western culture. Dr. Raja Ramanna released a Souvenir brought out on the occasion and felicitated V. V. Ranganathan on being conferred the title "Laya Kalaa Nipuna".

This was followed by a "Laya Vinyasa" by the Members of the Karnataka College of Percussion. B. D. Venugopal, son of B. Devendrappa whose birth centenary was celebrated rendered a Jalatharang recital accompanied by M. S. Govindaswamy (Violin), B. Dhruvaraj (Mridanga), R. R. Prathap (Ghata) and Mangalore Gururaj (Morsing).

The H. Puttachar Memorial award was presented to youngster V. Praveen, son of noted Mridanga Vidwan Ganakala Bhushana M. L. Veerabhadraiah by veteran A. Subba Rao on 28th. Praveen also was conferred the title "Laya Kalaa Prathibhamani". V. Sreenivasa Raju, Chairman, Programmes and Projects Committee of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore Kendra released a publication of the Arts Centre, "Proceedings of the Seminar - IV on *Thaalavaadyas*" and felicitated the awardee.

This was followed by a Harikatha recital *Seetha Kalyana* by Belur Vasanthalakshmi. Nagamma and A. Venkobachar Memorial Endowment concert was rendered by Vidwan Dr. B. S. Vijayaraghavan accompanied by S. Mahadevappa (Violin), Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma (Mridanga) and Sukanya Ramgopal (Ghata).

On 29th Kum. B. Bharathi of Sarvaraya Harikatha Paatashala, East Godavari, AP, rendered a Harikatha on *Parvathi Kalyana*.

D. R. Srikantaiah, President, Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce & Industry released a publication *Compositions of Flute H. Narasinga Rao*.

Vidushis Suguna Purushotham and Suguna Varadachari, disciples of Musiri Subramanya Iyer whose birth centenary was celebrated, rendered a vocal recital accompanied by H. K. Narasimha Murthy (Violin), H. S. Sudheendra (Mridanga) and H. Sivaramakrishnan (Ghata).

The sessions on the penultimate day on 30th included a meeting of experts regarding R & D activities pertaining to Leathers and Woods for percussion instruments. Dr. T. Lokhanadha Sharma, Regional Director, Southern Region, Handicrafts Board chaired the session. Prof. C. V. Sundaram (representing National Institute of Advanced Studies), Dr. C. Vijayendra Rao (representing Wood Research Institute), Vidwan A. Veerabhadraiah (Aruna Musicals), Artisans, craftsmen involved in the manufacture and maintenance of Mridangams participated. The proceedings have been separately covered and the findings recorded.

R. K. Srikantan Endowment programme, a Symposium on Birth Centenaries of great Music masters was chaired by noted Art Critic B. V. K. Sastry. R. K. Narayanaswamy, a noted vocalist and a senior disciple of Musiri, scholar musician Prof. T. R. Subramanyam of Delhi (another student of Musiri), B. M. Sundaram, Pondicherry spoke on the occasion and paid tributes to Sangeetha Kalanidhi Musiri Subramania Iyer (9.4.1899 - 24-3-1975), Ganavisharada Dr. B. Devendrappa (3.6.1899-9.6.1986), Harikatha D. Annaswami Bhagavathar (3.7.1899-16-8-1967), Tanjore Ramadoss Rao (2.4.1899 - 31.5.1961) and Umayalpuram Kodandarama Iyer (27.10.1899 - 1.6.1966).

The latest two issues of SRUTI were distributed to select participants. Copies of recorded audio cassettes of Tillanas and Pallavis of Prof. T. R. Subramanyan along with a publication containing notations for the same were also distributed. Proceedings of the Symposium have been separately recorded.

Besides, a study circle was held on the maintenance of Mridangam. P.V. Parameswaran, M. R. Rangaswamy and Anantharamaiah, the established Mridangam manufacturers and repairs of the city participated and explained the methods of correcting the "Meetu and Chaapu" and other aspects of maintaining the Mridangam. The concluding session was the K.C.K. Bhatta Memorial Endowment concert by veteran Sangitha Kalanidhi R. K. Srikantan accompanied by S. Seshagiri Rao (Violin), Madras A. Kannan (Mridanga) and Bangalore K. Venkataram (Ghata).

The concluding session on 31.5.1999 was held at Chowdiah Memorial Hall. K. Puttu Rao Memorial, Palghat Mani Award was presented to Veteran Vidwan Madras A. Kannan by Hon'ble Justice Y. Bhaskar Rao, Chief Justice of Karnataka. The Chief Justice presented the Award "Mridanga Kalashiromani" to Madras A. Kannan and released a publication of the Arts Centre "*Achievements in the Field of Percussive Arts over 50 years*". In his address Chief Justice observed that Music plays a unique part in the life of Man. He referred to the Medicinal aspects of Music and observed that Artists were honoured by Kings and Rulers in earlier days. This service is now rendered by voluntary organisations. In these days where our youngsters are getting influenced by foreign cultures, it is desirable that organisations like the Arts Centre organise these activities. Ashok Ramani's vocal recital accompanied by H. K. Venkataram (Violin), Praveen (Mridanga), and Ranganatha Chakrabarthi (Ghata), was the musical finale of the Utsav.

- Bangalore K. Venkataram

An Original Musician

Calcutta K. S. Krishnamurti, who passed away recently, was a true Sangeeta Acharya. Born on December 21, 1921, KSK, as he was popularly known, grew up in a musical environment. During his early days in the Hindu High School, Triplicane, G. V. Narayanaswamy (father of GNB) was his teacher. It was KSK's association with GVN that ignited his musical instincts.

KSK himself recalled that his joining the Annamalai University was an accident. His initial idea was to do mathematics. However, he chanced to be present when an interview was taking place for the selection of students to the Music College.

Tiger Varadachariyar, who was one of the interviewers, recognised KSK immediately, having seen him at GVN's house. He asked KSK to sing. When KSK sang "Perundaambe" (Suddhadhanyasi) of Muthiah Bhagavata, Tiger asked him to join the college.

Annamalai University was a model institution for learning Carnatic music. At that time, the staff was dominated by doyens such as Tiger Varadachariyar, Sattur Krishna Iyengar, Ponnaiah Pillai and Madurai Subramanya Iyer. The degree offered was "Sangeeta Bhushanam". The course was tough and gruelling. It was a residential course and students lived in hostels. They, thereby, benefited from a replication of the gurukula system combined with modern concepts like degrees and syllabi.

KSK recalled his experiences in Chidambaram, saying that the students had to get up early in the morning to do "akaara saadhkam", etc. They were given regular assignments and in fact, the first assignment given was to perform Sruti Bhedham in all the 72 Melakartas. They also sharpened their skills by conducting mock conferences.

Calcutta Krishnamurti's association with the legendary composer of this century, Papanasam Sivan, brought to fore many of the latter's rare compositions.

In the late 50s, when concert opportunities were few and far between mainly because of the domination by stalwarts, KSK moved to Calcutta. It was here that KSK's creative instincts bloomed. He set to music the songs of Subramaniya Bharati, Suddhananda Bharati, Ramalinga Swami, Jayadeva, Meerabai, Bharatidasan, Kannadasan etc. With the aid of students, Vasanta Kannan and Sumati Narayanan, KSK has presented innumerable thematic programmes like "Yahi Madhava" and "Panchali Sapatham". His last mega thematic presentation, "Kannan Vandan", received an overwhelming response owing to the unique concept.

Getting back to Chennai in early 70s, KSK was a reference point for most musicians, old and young. He was a repository of compositions and musicians regularly sought his clarification and advice. He also served in institutions such as Kala Peetham, Rishi Valley School and as a guest lecturer for the Institute of Correspondence Education, Madras University.

As a musician, KSK's strength was Raga Alapana. He could elaborate Ragas for any length of time and was equally at home with Rakthi Ragas and Apoorva Ragas. His immaculate Swara gnanam and gamaka Suddham were the hallmarks of his music. His sense of gamakas was almost perfect. He questioned the need to oscillate Swaras extensively and was a firm believer in the optimum use of gamakas. His lecture demonstrations on Gamakas and Raga Lakshanas were a treat to musicians and laymen.

KSK had been closely associated with and his alapanas did have a GNB flavour sometimes. However, his extensive listening and accumulation of material over the years had made him a unique and original musician.

His repertoire was extensive and varied. It was as if he knew all the songs. Musicians regularly sought his help for learning songs and he taught a number of scholarship students also.

KSK had composed Varnams, Kritis and Tillanas besides setting compositions to music. He sought to give proper shape to ragas like Kadnakutoohalam, Malavi and Janaranjani. He introduced many new Ragas not used often in his tunes like Priyadarshini, Gopikatilakam etc.,

KSK was a sought after Guru. His prime disciples include Sanjay Subramanyam, P. Unnikrishnan, K. N. Shashikiran, Sudha Raghunathan, Uma-Geetha, Suguna Varadachari, Bhushani Kalyanaraman, Salem Sriram, S. Kasturirangan, V. K. Manimaran and others.

His method of teaching was also very original. The songs were taught to students based on the student's ability to grasp Sangatis and reproduce.

Therefore, two disciples may render a song taught by KSK with subtle differences in Sangatis. He was always available to clarify doubts whatever be the time. He was also very open and forward in his thinking. He thought that music had come a long way since the days when musicians implicitly obeyed their gurus. He believed that there should be more questioning among students. He said it will make the system stronger and the musicians more capable.

Hailing from a traditional background, Krishnamurti's interest in propagating Carnatic music and appreciation of invocation, motivated him to make a major contribution in the first Video CD on Carnatic music, titled 'Nadopasana', towards the learning and understanding of Carnatic music.

Among the many awards that he received were "Sangeeta Acharya" and the prestigious "Sangeeta Kala Acharya" from the Music Academy in December 1998. During a special study organised by the Sruti Foundation on GNB, KSK was honoured with the title of "Sangeeta Kala Nipuna".

For him Carnatic music was spiritual and uplifting and more a way of life. He breathed music till his last on May 16, 1999.

Courtesy : "The Hindu"

Subramanya's Mantra

The Scriptures declare that the Lord assumed the form of SHANMUKHA - with Six faces. He taught the efficacy of His six-lettered name Sa Ra Va Na Bha Va. The significance of the letters :

*Sa confers - the plentitude of Sri Lakshmi
Ra gives the Wealth of Knowledge
Va bestows the felicity of enjoyment
Na gives protection from all forces of evil
Bha ensures immortality
Va confers beatitude.*

-From Sri Subramanya Tattvam. by N. Subramania Aiyar

- Courtesy : "Tattvaloka"

MOHINI ATTAM

By Kalyanikutty Amma

(It was an epoch-making life she led. From a coy girl from a respectable Nair family from South Malabar to a 'passive revolutionary' bringing about a renaissance in an artform that was treated with contempt and almost extinct, Kalyanikutty Amma's life was one stretch devoted to the dance art of what is today prevalent as Mohini Attam on the performing stage. Matching with Vallathol's crusading dynamism in reviving this artform Kalyanikutty Amma plunged herself into the practising field and paved way for its decent acceptance on the performing forum. Little wonder she had been hailed as the grand old mother of Mohini Attam.)

With her death in May an era in this art form has come to an end. We pay our tribute to her by publishing a paper she presented in the First All-India Sangeeth Natya Kala Conference organised by Kala Sadan cultural society, Mumbai, in 1977 - Ed.)

A garland round her neck and a vermilion mark on her forehead, a little girl would be taken to the temple and solemnly proclaimed 'the bride of the deity' by the parents. From that moment she had no connection whatsoever with the family of her birth. Marriage was forbidden and so was any contact with the world outside the temple. Such was the piety and blind faith of the ancient people in India who offered their children to temple deities as servants.

Dormitories were provided near the temple precincts for such girls and they were enjoined to remain there serving the deity by helping in the temple rituals, singing and dancing for the God. Food and clothing were provided in the temple and they came to be known as "Thevadichis" - 'Theva' means God, 'Adi' feet and 'Achi' wife or woman. Hence "Servant of God" or "Bride of God".

Brides of God

As Brides of God, they entertained a feeling that one day God would actually consummate their union, and sincerely used to implore God with all love and devotion to take them. Supreme love for God overflowed the hearts of these girls who dressed and danced to ecstasy. Tears of joy would run down their cheeks,

pious song they would lisp in trance, and their hearts would swell with divine love as tinkling anklets resounded incessantly in the temple halls. At times overcome by remorse they even wept before their Lord or angrily chided their beloved.

These "Thevadichis" enjoyed special rights in the temple. Carvings and frescoes depicting their dancing poses adorned the temple walls. Great dance teachers were appointed to train them. And these highly trained "Thevadichis" in turn adopted beautiful damsels and gave them intense training, thus ensuring continuity of tradition. This system prevailed for generations.

From Servant of God to Servant of Man

During the 14th century this art form which was confined within temple precincts was slowly taken to palaces of kings and chieftains. This sowed the seeds of the degradation of the dancing girls and the disintegration of the traditional system. When "brides of God" began to dance for the kings, the sanctity of the art was lost, though materially these dancing girls gained a lot having been showered with riches and power by patron kings. Some of them in Kerala even became wives and queens of the monarchs.

When the Servants of Gods began to serve

man, the term "Dance of the Bride of God" ("Thevadichiyattam") changed itself into "Mohini Attam" - "the Dance of the Temptress or Enchantress", This change, in a way, helped these girls amass wealth, It also paved the way for their moral degradation.

A cheap dance form known as "Achi Koothu", which was more of acrobatics than art, developed and gained popularity. Here the dancer danced on a platform strewn with coloured powder. By the end of the dance, the movements of the feet of the dancer would have produced patterns of Gods or animals depicted or floral designs on the coloured powder. There was another acrobatic feat whereby the dancer used to take with her tongue, coins thrown to her by her patrons. The "Kaikottikkali" or "Thiruvathirakali" - a sort of folk dance popular among the high caste women of Kerala is also an offshoot of "Thevadichiattam".

The renowned royal-composer of Travancore, Maharaja Swati Tirunal and Irayiamman Tampi composed a number of Padams and Varnams for Mohini Attam and used to enjoy seeing these performed. The dancers were given costly presents. Yet nobody came forward to wipe off the moral decay that had accumulated in the lives of the dancers. So debased had their lives become that decent society shunned them. The word "Thevadichi" which was once a synonym for sanctity and honoured became a term of abuse denoting a street walker or a cheap courtesan. Mohini Attam itself went under a cloud for many years.

Resurrection

It was in 1930 that Poet Vallathol brought Mohini Attam out of the morass into a new dawn. He erased obscenity from it and improved it, ensuring that no artistic value, was lost. The practice of Nattuvan or the teacher donning a turban and coat, walking behind the dancer on the stage and marking time with tiny Cymbals was discontinued. The instruments constituting the orchestra were modernised. Violin, Flute and

Mridangam and Edakka replaced the outmoded, old instruments. The Nattuvan and orchestra were positioned at the wings on the right side of the stage.

The task was herculean; the responsibilities immense. And Mohini Attam had no market then! Yet with two daughters, and a disciple Vimala Pillai (the sister-in-law of the famous Travancore sisters, Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini), I ventured on the uphill task. It was only after 1965 that educated and high-caste girls began coming to me to learn Mohini Attam.

Today Mohini Attam is a noble and respectable dance form in Kerala. Like every classical art, Mohini Attam is highly technical and the dancer has to confine herself to strict tenets and discipline. Understandably enough, many discrepancies have crept into this dance form today because of rash handling by half-baked dancers. This is a deplorable situation which unless deftly and properly handled, could sound the death-knell of this fine artform.

Technical details

There are more than sixty Adavus (steps) in Mohini Attam, classified under four heads, viz., "Thaagnam", "Jaganam", "Dhaganam", and "Vakram". Most of the Adavus have to be performed in Kaal Mandalam, the Arai Mandalam and a few by the Mukkal Mandalam.

Body movements should resemble swaying paddy plants, smooth and flowing. There are only three Adavus with the elbows and legs held straight. For the Mandalas, the feet should be placed 5 cms apart. But while dancing, the feet can move apart to a distance of 15 cms. Placing feet far apart and jumping up from the ground are forbidden.

Repertoire

There are seven different items in Mohini Attam : 1. Cholkettu, 2. Jathiswaram, 3. Varnam 4. Padam, 5. Thillana 6. Slokam and 7. Saptam.

In Cholketu there is only one number. But in all others there are a number of pieces. There is a belief that there are no Tillanas and Saptams in Mohini Attam. This is not true. I was taught a Tillana at Kala Mandalam in 1941.

It must be now more than 90 years since Saptam completely disappeared from Mohini Attam. Our revered teacher Krishna Panikkar and Padmavathy, the temple dancer of Mattancherry (Cochin) had some knowledge of Saptam. The few lines that we use in the Cholketu in invocation of Sri Rama have been taken from the once famous RAMA SAPTAM. The whole story of Rama used to be presented in olden days. Besides, the Dasavathara as delineated by Jayadeva was also adapted to Mohini Attam.

Costume - A Symbol of Purity

A word about the dancers costume. A 9-yard white saree and a white blouse constitute the costume. The saree should be worn with frills at the top and bottom. A part of the upper frill should serve as the covering for the bosom in a neat and artistic manner. The snow white dress is the hallmark of the Keralite.

Coiffeurs or hair-do is another important factor. The long hair should be tied in the "Kakapaksha" style and put up to resemble a serpent's hood. These rules were strictly adhered to, but today they are invariably discarded.

Courtesy:
"Sangeetha Natyakala Sangraham"

Musician & Tala

What does the musician do when singing to Tala? We speak of measuring time, counting time, beating time. But this is a gross view, an external, peripheral approach.

The musician feels the rhythm of song as well as improvisation. His mind swings to the rhythm and its cyclic configuration, the particular Tala. He pulsates with it. Counting and beating are not imperatives. If at all, they have to be gentle, not aggressive. When a second person joins with the Mridangam, he accompanies the musician. He is expected to provide the rhythmic "background" for the unfolding "picture" of the melody. For doing this he must be sensible enough to grasp the rhythmic flow of the melody. This sense cannot be got by arithmetical calculations, which are the easiest things to do. Calculations, conscious and long winding, belong to the rational part of the mind. They have a sort of dehydrating effect. By overdoing these both singer and percussionist tend to become strangers to the feeling for the rhythm of the song. There is not play of imagination either. In the absence of these two the effort, however spectacular, is not art.

- V.V.S.

Hindustani And Karnatak Ragas - A Comparative Study By Pt. K. G. Ginde

"Given the choice, I would like to breath my last in Sangeeth". That was Pt. K. G. Ginde's oft-repeated refrain. And what a coincidence! He did breath his last, five years ago in July, in Sangeeth, while at Sangeeth Research Academy, Calcutta, on a special assignment of recording Ragas and Bandishes.

A well-known Acharya, Kalakar and a Karma Yogi, Pt. Ginde was a traditionalist, and a classicist but not a fanatic. Trained in the true Gurukul tradition and geared into institutionalised coaching, he served as a strong and vital link between the tradition of the past and trends of the present milieu, trying to bring about a 'rapport of the contrasting genres'. Music to him was more a mission than a profession and teaching his 'magnificent obsession'.

Very few could display his profundity of knowledge and match his prodigious output. Pt. Ginde's insight into the Ragas and their varieties was as deep as his repertoire of Bandishes was vast. His repertoire numbered about 2000 compositions and Ragas he had mastered were about 250.

What had this master-Guru to say about Ragas of Indian Music - both South and North? In tribute to the Pandit on his fifth Punyatithi, we reproduce a paper he presented at the First All-India Natya Kala Conference, organised by the Kala Sadan Cultural Society, Mumbai in 1977 and compiled in the book, "Sangeetha Natya Kala Sangraham." - Ed.)

Indian music today, whether in the North or in the South is comparatively modern in concept. Neither of them has retained its ancient form as propounded in the chapters on Music of the ancient treatises such as Bharata's *Natya Shastra*, or in the later works, namely, *Brhadhesi*, *Bharata-Bhashya* and *Sangeeta Ratnakara*. The Raga now forms the basis of all Indian music - Hindustani or Karnatak. These ancient Sanskrit works are looked up only for history of music and authority and as such both the systems fall in line with each other. However, we may say that even today, our classical Ragadari music is a modernised and modified form of the same old traditions.

As a matter of fact, music is a practical art and as such, ever progressive according to conditions prevailing from time to time and place to

place. Hence it may confidently be said that in principle, both Hindustani and Karnatak systems have a common foundation, blossomed into two separate systems over the past few centuries in regard to the interpretation of Ragas and the method of their elaboration.

Common Practice in Early Lessons

In fact, since the basis are common for both the systems, similar practices have been adopted in imparting the rudimentary lessons. In Karnatak music, the first lessons are in Raga Mayamalavagoula, corresponding to the Hindustani Bhairava. And the guru - sishya parampara in the North followed the same tradition of first teaching Swara singing in Bhairava. My revered Guru, Padma Bhushan Dr. S.N. Ratanjankar taught my first lessons in Raga Bhairava, for nearly 1 1/2 years.

At the same time there did exist in Karnatak school a practice of also imparting the first lessons in Sankarabharanam, corresponding to the Hindustani Bilawal. Today, the practice is to impart the first lessons in Bilawal and Mayamalavagoula in Hindustani and Karnatak systems respectively.

Adoptions & Adaptations

During the course of the last couple of centuries there had been a lot of 'give and take' between the two systems. As a result, we find many Ragas of Karnatak music such as Hamsadhwani, Saveri, Devaranjani, Keeravani, Kambhoji, Vasantamukhari, Gopika Vasantam, Vachaspati, Bilahari, Malayamarutham, Simhendramadhyamam, Abhogi, Charukesi, Janasammodini adopted in the Hindustani system and have become quite popular with the audience in the North. Similarly Ragas of the Hindustani variety like Hameer-Kalyani, Behag, Hejaz, Jhinjhuti, Dwijawanti, Dhani have found their way into the Karnatak fold.

Besides, there are many Ragas in both, which have common Raga Swarupa but are known under different names, e.g., Mohanam of Karnatak music is called Bhopali in Hindustani; Hindolam of the South is Malkouns of the North; Madhyamavathi of the South is the Madhumad Sarang of the North. Then there are similar melodies under different names and different modes in the same names. Hindol of the North is quite different from the Hindolam of the South; Bhairavi of the North is like Hanumatodi of the South while the Karnatak Bhairavi is somewhat like the Hindustani Asawari. All the same, the basic principles, not only in theory but even in practical exposition of music in India are as much intact in the North as in the South. The only differences that exist between them are in certain Ragas and in the 'Gamakas' or 'Uchchar' (pronunciation).

However, as stated earlier, the Raga now forms the basic idea behind Indian Music, be it Karnatak or Hindustani. The definition of a Raga gives us an abstract idea thus :

*Yoyam dvanivisesastu svaravarna
vibhusitaha
ranjako janacittanam sa ragaha
kathyathe budhaihi.*

"A passage of musical tunes, sung or played in succession which interests, attracts or pleases the listener is a Raga". The word "Vama" is significant in this definition. It refers to succession of tones and not simultaneous sounding thereof as in Western music. The necessity of mentioning the condition of "Ranjakatva" or musical value was felt because a passage of musical tone may or may not be of any musical value. A child cries in musical tones, a person weeps in musical tones- nay, even a so-called passage of music may not have a jot of musical value.

Raga - A Musical Sermon

A Raga therefore is a sweet passage of music. Its further details give us the flats and sharps, their number i.e., 5, 6, or 7, the strong and weak ones among them, its typical identifying passage - the nucleus, so to say. But its basis is a certain passage of music having a musical value which is sweet to hear. This little passage of music is like a little religious or moral text to be developed into a musical sermon, so to say, by the musician according to his practical capacity and experience.

Prabhandas

The Raga is not a set composition. On the contrary, musical compositions are set in a Raga. In olden days, the musical compositions were known as Prabhandhas and were mostly composed in Sanskrit. Sarangadeva in his *Sangeeta Ratnakar* devotes a whole chapter to Prabhandhas and mentions some other types of musical compositions too such as Vastu and Roopakams. Under "Ela Prabandhas" he refers to two types of Prabandhas known as Deshaila, which were musical compositions in the regional languages such as "Karnataka, Lata, Gauda, Andhra and Dravida". This significantly proves that along with Sanskrit compositions, there did exist musical

compositions in regional languages even before Sarangadeva. Today, we have various types of compositions that exist in both Karnatak and Hindustani Music.

There is Raga-Alapana in both the systems and it is expressed in some syllables which have no connotation such as "Ne Te Re Na Tom Nom" etc., in the South as in the North.

Prototypes

A critical study of the musical compositions prevalent in both these systems will disclose their origin in the ancient Prabandhas. The four or five stanzas namely the Udgraha' Dhruva, Melapaka, Abhoga and the Antara of the ancient Prabandhas have their prototypes in the Pallavi, Anupallavi, Muktayee, Charanam and Chittaswaram in the Karnatak Varnam and compositions and the Sthayee, Antara, Sanchari and Abhoga of the Drupads, Trivat, Chaturang and some Sadharas of the Hindustani compositions.

Keertanams of the South and the Dhrupads of the North have their origin in the old Prabandhas, dedicated to some God or to mother nature. In both the systems, these compositions are treated with a sense of gravity. They have a style of their own. In short, these compositions are more or less musical adaptations of the stotras or Stutipadas of the holy temples. They are to be sung according to a set programme. The 'Raga Shuddhi', the 'Shabdochharana-Shuddhi', the 'Gayana-Krama' are to be strictly observed.

Modern Khayal and Kriti

The Kritis and the Khayals are comparatively modern musical compositions in which a new dimension was added giving scope for the expansion of the Raga in Alapana and in interpretation of the composition according to the musician's Manodharma. Of course, apart from the manner of Swara and Varnochhar, the only difference between the performance of a Kriti in

the South and that of a Khayal in the North is that the former is wound up before the audience begins to feel its existence while the latter is taken up for lengthy elaboration. One can hear half a dozen Kritis in an hour's time while, half the Khayal is not over by an hour. There is no hard and fast rule. Duration of the interpretation of the composition depends upon the capacity of the musician, not to repeat the same passages of music over and over again, but to create new musical phrases and image every moment. Ordinarily, a Khayal should not be prolonged after the singer has exhausted all his ideas nor a kriti dispatched within ten minutes. I would rather humbly plead with the Karnatak Vidwans to put in efforts to expand and elaborate the ideas of the original composer by Alapana and Niraval consistent with the original version.

There is a third type of musical composition in Karnatak music known as Javalis which are more or less of a light type and are amorous in purport. These are very much similar to the Thumris of the Hindustani system. The Padams also fall under the same category and are made use of by the dancers for expression of Abhinaya. The Tarana of the North and Tillana of the South demonstrate verbal dexterity and rhythmic play.

The Lakshan-Geetas are a type of compositions which have been in existence in the Karnatak music system. Pt. Bhatkhande introduced Geetas in the Hindustani system for the first time. The basic description of the Ragas in which they were composed was set forth. Pt. Bhatkhande's Lakshan - Geetas are all in Hindi and have become quite popular even among the vidwans of the North.

Similarly, Dr. S. N. Ratanjankar adopted the "Varnams" of the South in the Hindusthani system and had composed a few Varnams in Sanskrit in Hindustan Ragas. These have been incorporated in the syllabus of the course of studies in the North at many institutions and have proved very useful in attaining proper Swaragyan and Talagyan.

Jaideva's Ashtapadis are another set of compositions sung both in the North and South. Though they are not sung in the Ragas of their original versions, musicians set them in any Ragas that suit their taste and fancy.

Plea for National Bharati

So far, we looked at the common features between the two systems as they are prevalent. Now to an effort towards a closer link. Like my revered Guru, Dr. Ratanjankar, I earnestly feel that Hindustani music will be greatly enriched by introducing many of the Karnatak Ragas and types of compositions. Similarly, if the Karnatak system readily accepts certain aspects of Hindustani embellishments and mode of compositions, without interfering in the distinct style and characteristics of both the systems, it would not be difficult to build up the "NATIONAL BHARATI". There should not be any sin in Hindustani musicians singing a Varnam or a Kriti in Ritigoula or in

Karnatak musicians singing a Dhrupad or Khayal in Bageshree. In fact, I have been keenly observing many musicians of both Hindustani and Karnatak systems indulging in such experiments.

It may not be out of place to bring to notice here that there have been efforts at presenting full-fledged Karnatak-Hindustani Jugalbandi. On one occasion Vidwan Tiruchi Swaminatha Bhagawathar and I performed together "Dikshitar's famous "Vathapi" (Hamsadhvani), Tyagaraja's "Nammivachina" (Kalyani) with Niraval, and Swaraprastharas, a Ragamalika Slokam and a number of other compositions. We were able to present an integrated picture of what National Bharati would be like.. The concert was well received and appreciated by Rasikas. With concerted efforts and understanding from both the Karnatak and Hindustani musicians, the new system of National Bharati should not at all be difficult to evolve.

APPEAL

Four Volumes in the "GARLAND" series titled **A Garland, Another Garland, Yet Another Garland & The Fragrant Garland** are before the music -loving public. Readers of SHANMUKHA would have perused the gracious reviews of the books by the Editor. It is my desire to wind up the 'GARLAND' series of Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers, Musicians with the fifth and the last of the series. I shall be grateful if Vidwans and Vidushis of standing and musicologists help with full-bio-data, special comments, anecdotes and achievements and join the non-commercial *Yagna*. Those whose lives had been included already may peruse the contents in the four books & suggest additions worthy of being passed on to music - loving public & posterity.

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NINTH ANNUAL TALENT PROMOTION FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

(JUNE TO OCTOBER 1999)

FESTIVAL SPONSORED BY INDIAN OIL CORPORATION LTD.

Venue : Jasubhai Convention Hall, Shanmukhananda Tower Complex

PROGRAMME (d.v.)

17-7-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Savita Narasimhan (Chennai) (Initially trained by Shri O.V. Subramaniam & currently being trained by Chitraveena Ravikiran) Shri V. Balakrishnan (Mumbai) Shri Rajesh Srinivasan (Mumbai)	- - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam
18-7-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Shri Umamaheswaran (Mumbai) (Disciple of Smt. T.R. Balamani, a seasoned Guru of Mumbai) Shri Anand Viswanathan (Mumbai) Shri Prasad Maniappan (Mumbai)	- - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam
24-7-1999 Saturday a) 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.	Master Easwar Ramakrishnan (Trivandrum) (Son and disciple of Shri P.P. Ramakrishnan) Shri P. P. Ramakrishnan Shri G. S. Rajesh Nath (Trivandrum)	- - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam
b) 7.35 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.	Smt. Subhalakshmi Murali (Mumbai) (An M.A., M. Phil in Music, Smt. Subhalakshmi is currently trained by Mrs. Subhalakshmi Swaminathan, Mumbai)	-	Vocal
25-7-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Ms. Gayatri Sankar (Chennai) (Visually handicapped artiste, Ms. Gayatri is the disciple of Shri M.D. Ramanathan and Shri Puducode Krishnamurthy) Ms. Padma Sankar (Chennai) Madipakkam Shri Suresh (Chennai)	- - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam
1-8-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Ms. Hema Hariharan (Mumbai) (Disciple of Bangalore Smt. Vijayalakshmi & Mumbai N.S. Chandrashekhara Bhagavathar) Shri Nilesh Viswanathan (Mumbai) Shri S. Shankaranarayanan (Mumbai)	- - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam
14-8-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Ms. P.V. Geetha (Chennai) (Disciple of Shri Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavathar) Shri S.V. Ramachandran (Mumbai) Master Vijay Natesan (Mumbai)	- - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam

15-8-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Chitrambari Krishnakumar (Chennai) (Disciple of Smt. Charumati Ramachandran) Shri Melakkaveri Thyagarajan (Chennai) Shri Hanumanthapuram Bhoovaragan (Chennai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam Veena
21-8-1999 Saturday a) 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. b) 7.35 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.	Ms. N. Vijayalakshmi (Chennai) (Disciple of Smt. Kalpagam Swaminathan) Shri K.B. Ganesh (Mumbai) Master C. Chaitanyakumar & Party (Bangalore) (Disciple of Shri L.V. Mukund & Dr. N. Ramani)	- - - -	Veena Mridangam Flute
22-8-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Smt. Radha Parthasarathy (Chennai) (Disciple of Shri P.S. Narayanaswamy) Ms. Jayanthi Kesav (Chennai) Shri K.V. Gopalakrishnan (Chennai)	- - - -	Vocal Violin Mridangam
4-9-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Shri Vaikom T. V. Jayachandran & Party (Vaikom) (Disciple of Shri T. M. Thyagarajan & Shri R. Venkataraman of Trivandram)	-	Vocal
5-9-1999 Sunday a) 6.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. b) 7.35 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.	Master A. Rohit (Chennai) & Party (Disciple of Shri B.A. Chidambaranathan, Chennai) Master Srivatsan Sundara Rajan (Mumbai) (Disciple of Shri P.N. Krishnamurthy of B.A.R.C.) Shri Anand Viswanathan (Mumbai) Shri A. K. Gopalakrishnan (Mumbai)	- - - - -	Vocal Vocal Violin Mridangam
13-9-1999 Monday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Oppiliappan Koil Shri N. Venkatesa Prasad (Chennai) (Disciple of Smt. T. R. Navaneetham of Kumbakonam) Ms. Ranjani Ramakrishnan (Mumbai) Shri K. Kumar (Mumbai)	- - - -	Flute Violin Mridangam
2-10-1999 Saturday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	World Music Day - Mahatma Gandhi Jayanthi Programme to be announced		
3-10-1999 Sunday 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	Special Programme to mark the Finale of Ninth Talent Promotion Festival - Vocal Music by Dr. Lakshmi Podhuval & Party (Madurai) (A disciple of Shri T. M. Thyagarajan)	-	Vocal/Recital

S. SESHADRI
V. RANGARAJ
Hon. Secretaries

Meeting of Two Yogis

By Yogacharya B. K. S. Iyengar

(Yogacharya B. K. S. Iyengar recounts his memorable first meeting with Yehudi Menuhin in Mumbai in 1952)

Lord Yehudi Menuhin, my devoted and dedicated pupil in yoga, a maestro on the violin and a great friend of India left this planet with dignity and majesty on March 12, 1999, at the age of eighty two.

His death was majestic as the sound of music was ringing in his head and heart when he breathed his last. Also it was dignified as he was in Berlin to conduct the orchestra of Berlin in a concert.

Albert Einstein, on listening to Menuhin, when he was young, commented, "I do believe that there is God in heaven". That was the impression young Yehudi created in Einstein through the finest tune of the universal sound of music that emanated from his young heart through his violin playing. For him the sound was the music of the Soul.

It was by chance that I met Yehudi Menuhin in 1952 at Raj Bhavan, Mumbai. He had a very busy schedule and allotted five minutes for our meeting. The Menuhin reception committee members insisted that I meet him even for five minutes. It seems he wanted to meet me, when he heard from the members that I was a leading teacher of yoga staying on Pune.

I had not heard of Menuhin before, though my pupil told me that he was one of the leading violinists of the world. Yet, I thought that it was not worth travelling for hours to see him for only five minutes. So I refused the offer. But the pressure was so much from the musicians and friends that they said that it was worth meeting him even for a minute.

I consented to go to Mumbai to meet him at the appointed time. It was seven in the morning. Smt. Mehra Vakil, (wife of Dr. Jal Vakil,

famous Cardiologist) drove me to Raj Bhavan.

We both waited for about twenty minutes at Point Bungalow, where he was staying. There was no sign of anyone calling us in.

I became restless and as the main door was open, I went from room to room to find someone. In the interior room I saw Menuhin on bed and woke him up telling that, "You had called me to meet you for five minutes and now it is seven thirty".

He was embarrassed by my entry in his room, got up and said that he would see me in five minutes.

He came and expressed 'sorry' to keeping us waiting. He looked so much tired that, instead of talking to each other, I offered to teach him the art of relaxation.

He agreed at once. Then I spread the blanket and made him lie down and adjusted his joints, bones, muscles, fibres and cells to relax fast and I sat near his head and manipulated his senses of perception to become quiet so that the brain and mind reached the state of passivity through Shanmukhi Mudra. I kept my index and middle fingers on the closed eyes, thumbs on ears, ring fingers to make the breathing rhythmic and slow and little finger on the upper lip.

In two minutes, he went to sleep and was in that position for forty to forty-five minutes when his eyeballs, which had sunk into the sockets slightly moved up. So I released my fingers from his forehead and told him,

Sir, I have taken a long time of yours. I see prominent and eminent people like Homi Bhabha waiting for forty-five minutes to meet you, permit me to go".

He said, "Sir, I have not spoken to you, I want to talk to you".

Saying this, he went out and told all that he be excused as he wanted to talk to me and told them that they too could join.

I had read that morning in 'The Times of India' (front page) that Menuhin stood on his head with Jawaharlal Nehru. Hence, I asked him to show. As he was reluctant, I offered to show him what I practised if he was interested.

He showed his keenness and I demonstrated another forty-five minutes my practice. He was so much impressed and came forward to show his Shirshasana. I saw him pose and offered to correct him if he did not mind. I placed the interlocked fingers and head in precise positions and balanced him on his head. At once, he felt light and rejuvenating. When I brought him down from his head stand, thrilled he said, "What an experience of exhilaration!"

Thus five minutes' meeting not only lasted for three hours but continued as long as he was in Mumbai.

His concert on his last day of his stay at Regal Cinema theatre was so grand that he embraced me and kissed me for his success and since then, we both grew closer and intimate with each other.

In 1954 as he was again invited by Prime Minister Nehru, he asked me to be with him in Mumbai and Delhi.

My teaching had a tremendous impact on his playing. He presented me with an Omega Chronometer wrist watch inscribing "To, my best violin teacher, 1954".

So our five minutes meeting lasted till the end of his life with the traditional touch of Guru-Shishya relationship.

It was in 1997, November, I met him last and showed how to do head balance and other poses with the help of props as he was losing confidence to do independently.

Being a perfectionist, he used all my teaching methods in his violin play and brought out a book mentioning how Yoga helps one to play violin.

In my life, I had occasion to teach intellectual stalwarts, philosophers, musicians, dancers, singers, administrators, politicians and so on. **I consider Jayprakash Narayan and Yehudi Menuhin as outstanding personalities of the century with untainted head and heart.**

As I knew Menuhin very well, I can say that he was the votary of human rights before Human Rights Commissions were established, and a philanthropist who helped people irrespective of their religion or region showing excellence in word, thought and deed.

He was like a child with no malice to anyone, humane at heart, and inspirer to young budding artists, an author, a philosopher and a friend of all.

It is India's good fortune that our beloved Jawaharlal Nehru invited him. He donated the entire proceeds of his concerts to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. In turn, Menuhin became a devotee of Yoga. That made him feel 'at home' in India, and appreciate our music, culture and art.

Actually, he worked as a cultural ambassador of India by presenting our artistes to the Western audiences.

I lost a devoted Shishya, India lost a best friend and the world a wizard of violin. It may take centuries to witness such a person.

May his soul rest on the lap of Mother Earth forever with the blessing of God !

Courtesy : "Bhavan's Journal"

"Sangeet Abhisheki"

A product of the Renaissance decades which helped sustain the classical arts in pre -- independence India and one who extended the horizon of classical, music Pt. Jitendra Abhisheki, who passed away early this year was a trail - blazer.

Trained in Agra Gharana and having absorbed the grandeur of Jaipur Gharana, Abhisheki extended his musical horizon to what has become a landmark shaili today called Natya Sangeet.

There have been musicians uniquely specialised in certain Ragas. In Karnatak music, for instance, names such as "Sankarabharanam Narasayya" and "Todi Sitaramayya" were famous, attributed to the Ragas they specialised in. They were known to have delineated the Ragas endlessly for hours/days and had made them uniquely their own. Abhisheki could be classed among them for he was known for his unique "Yaman". In fact, on his death, it was lamented that 'Yaman had lost its lustre!' It is said that his rendition of *Devagharche dnyat kunala* in this Raga was unsurpassed for Raga enunciation and interpretation of the composition. In his stentorian voice Raga Devta unfolded itself with grace and grandeur. And his ever imaginative mind spun sequencies and phrases of immaculate beauty.

He gave a new face-lift to Natya Sangeet while he added a new dimension to classical idiom. The play of one in the other was smooth and spontaneous that it was difficult to sift one from the other.

"For almost a quarter century, Pandit Abhisheki strode the world of music like a colossus and was responsible for combining old and new 'Ragas' in a symbolic manner to be presented in popular state plays" stated a press release reporting on his death.

Pt. Abhisheki's extensive training in classical music under great Gurus like Pt. Jagannathbuwa Purohit of Agra Gharana and Pt. Gulabhai Jasdanwala and Khansaheb Aziauddin Khan of Jaipur Gharana and others such as Pt. Ratnakant Ramnathkar and Girijabai Kelkar earned him a high place in classical music. Inheriting Bhakti Sangeet from his father who was head priest of the renowned Mangeshi Temple of Goa and exposed to local folk music and the Western idiom and with an innate flair for Natya Padas, he blazed a new trail giving the Marathi theatre a scintillating Natya Sangeet. It is no secret that he revived "Natya Sangeet" from near-extinction with a sustaining force. With his creative instincts coupled with his classical sensitivity, he carved a niche, for himself as a composer and performer. His performances appealed to both the common man and connoisseur.

Thanks to his efforts, he not only promoted Natya Sangeet, but trained with a foresight disciples who would hold the 'Parampara' aloft. Ramdas Kamath, Raja Kale, Ajit Kadkhade and his own son Shaunak are the future hopes.

And for his service to music he earned the awards of "Natya Darpan", "Lata Mangeshkar Puraskar" and also "Padma Shree" from Government of India.

-Kinnari

நாடகப் பேராசிரியரும் நானும் அவ்வை தி. க. சண்முகம்

நாடகப்பேராசிரியர் "பத்மபூஷணம்" பம்மல் திரு. சம்பந்த முதலியார் அவர்கள் 1961-ஆம் ஆண்டு செப்டம்பர் 24-ஆம் நாள் இறைவன் திருவடி சேர்ந்தார். அப்பெரியாரது புனிதமான ஆன்மா அமைதியாகப் பிரிந்து தமிழ் நாடகக் கலையோடு இரண்டறக்கலந்துவிட்டது. 1973 பிப்ரவரி முதல் நாள் அவரது நூற்றாண்டு விழாவினை மிகச்சிறப்பாகக் கொண்டாடியது தமிழ் நாடக உலகம்.

1873-ஆம் ஆண்டு பிப்ரவரி முதல் நாள் தமிழ் மாநிலம் அவரைத் தாங்கும் பேறுபெற்றது. படித்துப் பட்டம் பெற்று உத்தியோகத்துறையில் ஈடுபட்டிருந்த அவரது பணி நாடகக்கலையுலகிற்குக் கிடைத்தது தமிழகம் செய்த தவப்பயன் என்றே சொல்ல வேண்டும்.

நாடகக் கலையுலகில் ஒரு ஒளிவிளக்காக நின்று நமக்கெல்லாம் வழி காட்டியாகத் திகழ்ந்த அந்த ஜோதி அனைந்துவிட்டது.

பம்மல் சம்பந்தனார் அவர்களோடு நான் தொடர்பு கொள்ள நேர்ந்த இளம்பருவ நிகழ்ச்சியை இப்போது எண்ணிப்பார்க்கிறேன்.

1922-ஆம் ஆண்டு அக்டோபர் ஏழாம் நாள் அந்தப் பெறற்கரிய பேற்றினைப் பெற்றேன். அப்போது நான் சதாவதானம் தெ. பொ. கிருஷ்ணசாமி பாவலர் அவர்களின் பால மனோஹர சபாவில் இருந்தேன். பாவலர் அவர்கள் குழுவில் தான் நான் முதன் முதலாக முதலியார் அவர்களின் நாடகத்தில் நடிக்கும் வாய்ப்பினைப்பெற்றேன். அப்போது எனக்கு வயது ஒன்பது. பாவலர் என்னை மனோகாகப் பயிற்றுவித்தார். பால மனோகா சபாவின் "பால மனோகரன்" என்று பிரமாதமாக சென்னை நகரமெங்கும் விளம்பரப்படுத்தினார். ஆனைக் கவுனிக்கு மேற்புறம் இருந்த ராயல் தியேட்டரில் "மனோஹரன்" நாடகம் அரங்கேறியது. நாடகப் பேராசிரியர் பம்மல் சம்பந்த முதலியார் அன்று தலைமை தாங்கினார். நான் சிறுவனாக இருந்தபோதிலும் அன்றைய நிகழ்ச்சிகள் அழிக்கமுடியாத சித்திரமாக என் உள்ளத்தில் பதிந்திருக்கின்றன.

இடைவிடாது ஒத்திகை நடைபெற்று வந்ததால் நாடகத்தன்று எனக்குத் தொண்டை பலமாகக் கட்டிக்கொண்டது. இந்நிலையில் நாடகத்தை எழுதிய ஆசிரியரே தலைமை தாங்குகிறார் என்ற செய்தி எனக்கு அச்சத்தைக் கொடுத்தது. அதிலும் அவரே மனோகரன் பாத்திரம் ஏற்று பலமுறை மேடைகளில் நடித்தவர் என்பதை மற்றவர்கள் கூறியபோது மேலும் பயமாக இருந்தது. பாவலர் அவர்கள் என் முதுகில் தட்டிக்கொடுத்து பயப்படாமல் நடிக்கச் சொன்னார்.

அன்று நாங்கள் வேடம் புனைந்து கொண்டிருந்தபோது இரு பெரியார்கள் உள்ளே வந்தனர். அவர்கள் யாரென்று அறியாமல் நாங்கள் திகைத்தோம். அவர்களோடு பின்னே வந்த பாவலர், வேடம் புனைந்து கொண்டிருந்த எங்கள் எல்லாரிடமும் அவர்களை அறிமுகப்படுத்தினார். ஒருவர் பம்மல் சம்பந்த முதலியார். மற்றவர் அவரோடு கதாநாயகியாக நடித்த திரு. ரங்கவடிவேலு முதலியார்.

அப்பெரியார்கள் இருவரும் எங்களோடு, குழந்தை உள்ளத்தோடு அளவளவாவி மகிழ்ந்தனர். எனக்கும் அன்று விஜயாளாக வேடம் புனைந்த மற்றொரு நடிக்கும் திரு. ரங்கவடிவேலு முதலியார் பக்கத்தில் நின்று ஒப்பனை செய்வதில் உதவி புரிந்தார். எனக்குத் தொண்டை கட்டிக்கொண்டிருப்பதை பாவலர், பம்மல் முதலியார் அவர்களிடம் கூறியபோது அவர் சிரித்துக்கொண்டே "பாதகமில்லை-தேரீயமாக நடி" என்று அன்போடு கூறி என் அச்சத்தைப் போக்கினார்.

நாடகம் தொடங்கியது. பாவலர் அவர்கள் எனக்குப் பயிற்றுவித்தபடி நான் உற்சாகமாக நடித்தேன். என்னுடைய இளம்பருவத்தை எண்ணியோ என்னவோ சபையோர் எல்லோரும் அடிக்கடி கைதட்டலின் மூலம் தங்கள் மகிழ்ச்சியைத் தெரிவித்தனர்.

"மனோகரனில்" முக்கியமான கட்டம் சங்கிலி அறுக்கும் காட்சி. அக்காட்சியில் என் முழு வலிமையையும் பயன்படுத்தி ஆவேசமாக நடித்ததால் இறுதியில் மூர்ச்சையற்றுக் கீழே விழுந்த போது அயர்வால் ஒரு நிமிடம் அப்படியே எழுந்திருக்க முடியாமல் கிடந்தேன். திரை விழுந்ததும் பாவலர் அவர்கள் ஓடிவந்து கீழே கிடந்த என்னைத் தூக்கி முத்தமிட்டுப் பாராட்டினார். அந்தக் காட்சி முடிந்ததும் நாடகப் பேராசிரியர் மேடையில் வந்து பேசினார். அவருடைய பேச்சின் சுருக்கம் கீழ் வருமாறு :-

"நான் எழுதிய நாடகங்கள் யாவற்றிலும் 'மனோகா' மிக உயர்ந்தது என்பதை நீங்கள் அறிவீர்கள். இந்நாடகத்தைச் சென்ற இருபத்தைந்து ஆண்டுகளாக எங்கள் குகை விலாச சபையில் நானே மனோகரனாக வேடம் புண்டு நடித்திருக்கிறேன். சிறந்த நடிகர்கள் பலர் மனோகரனாக வேடம் தரித்து நடிப்பகையும் நானே நேரில் பார்க்கிறுக்கிறேன். எனக்கே வாய்க்கவில்லையே. முதுமைப்பருவத்தை நோக்கிச் சென்று கொண்டிருக்கிறேன். வீரமாக நடிப்பகர்த்திய வலிமை குறைந்து வருகிறது. நான் நாடகக்கலையில் நுழைந்த அய்வு பெறும் காலம் நெருங்கிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறது.

இன்றைக்கு "அமிர்த வசன நாடக திலகம்" மாஸ்டர் டி.கே. சண்முகம் மனோகரனாக நடிக்கக்கூடிய பங்குதான் என் மனைக்கு சாந்தியும் சந்தோஷமும் ஏற்பட்டது. நான் விவசாய நாடகங்களாக ஆவலோடு எதிர்பார்க்க ஒரு உத்தம நடிகர் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்படுவதை இந்த இளம் சிறுவனுடைய நடிப்பு வெளிப்படுத்தியது. கடவுள் இச்சின்னவற்றை நடிக்கருக்கு நீண்ட ஆயுளையும் நாடகக் கலைத்துறையில் மேன் மேலும் வளம்சீரையும், புகழையும் தருவாராக."

இப்பேச்சை அன்று முதலியார் ஆங்கிலத்தில் பேசினார். அவர் பேசியதைப் பாவலர் அவர்கள் ஒவ்வொரு வார்த்தையாக எனக்கு மொழிபெயர்த்துச் சொல்லி உற்சாகப் படுத்தினார். நாடகப் பேராசிரியர் தம் பேச்சை முடித்ததும் நான் அவர் பாதங்களில் பணிந்தேன். அவர் அன்போடும், மகிழ்வோடும் என்னைக் கட்டிக் கொண்டு உச்சிமோந்து வாழ்த்தினார்.

அடுத்தவாரம் மீண்டும் "மனோகரா" நாடகம் நடைபெற்றபோது பம்மல் சம்பந்த முதலியார் அவர்கள் தம் கையால் எனக்கு ஒரு தங்கப் பதக்கம் பரிசளித்தார். அன்று வெளியிடப்பெற்ற ஒரு விளம்பர அறிக்கை இன்னும் என்னிடம் பத்திரமாக இருக்கிறது. என் தந்தையார் அதைத் தம் இறுதி காலம் வரையில் பொன்னே போல் போற்றிவைத்திருந்தார். அவருடைய மறைவுக்குப்பின் அவ்வறிக்கை இன்றுவரை எங்களிடம் இருந்து வருவது பெரும்பேறு என்றே நம்புகிறேன்.

அதற்குப் பிறகு நாங்கள் சொந்தமாக நாடகக் குழுவைத் தொடங்கி நடத்திவந்தபோது எங்களுக்கு "மனோகரா" நாடகம் உயிர் நாடியாக விளங்கியது. இடைக்காலத்தில் எங்களுக்கு வருவாயில்லாது கஷ்டப்பட நேர்ந்த காலங்களில் எல்லாம் "மனோகராவும்" "இராமயணமும்" தான் வருவாய்க்குரிய நாடகங்களாக விளங்கின.

ஒரு சமயம் நாடகப் பேராசிரியர் அவர்களுக்கு நாங்கள் கொடுக்க வேண்டிய (ராயல்டி) உரிமைத்தொகை நீண்டகாலமாக வருவாயின்மையால் கொடுக்கப்படாமல் நூற்றுக்கணக்கில் தேங்கிவிட்டது. அப்போது மதுரைக்கு வந்த பம்மல் முதலியார் அவர்கள் எங்கள் வேண்டுகோளுக்கிணங்கி மொத்தத் தொகையில் பாதியைத் தள்ளிக்கொடுத்து உதவியது இன்னும் எனக்கு நினைவிருக்கிறது.

1918-இல் நாங்கள் சென்னைக்கு வந்தோம். அன்று முதல் அப்பெருந்தகையார் காலமாகும் வரை ஒவ்வொரு ஆண்டிலும், நானும், தம்பி பகவதியும் பிப்ரவரி முதல் நாளன்று அவரது இல்லம் சென்று மாலை 6.00-ல் வாழ்த்துக்கூறி அஞ்சலி செலுத்தி வந்தோம். அந்த பாக்கியம் தொடர்ந்து கிடைக்காததை எண்ணும்போது கண்ணீர் பொங்குகிறது.

நாங்கள் நாடகப் பேராசிரியரின் நாடகங்களில் நடித்ததைத் தவிர அவரிடமிருந்து பயிற்சி எதுவும் பெற்றதில்லை என்றாலும் தந்தையிலும் மேலான அவரைப் பிரிந்து துயரம் எங்களை விட்டு அகலவில்லை. பூர்வ ஜென்மத் தொடர்பு என்று ஏதோ கூறுகிறார்களே அப்படி ஒரு பந்தம் எங்களுக்கும் நாடகப் பேராசிரியர் அவர்கட்கும் இருந்திருக்க வேண்டுமென்றே நான் உறுதியாக நம்புகிறேன்.

நாற்பத்திஏழு ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன் ஏதுமறியாப்பருவத்தில் நான் அவருடைய மனத்தைக் கவரும் விதத்தில் நடித்திருக்க முடியாதென்பதை உணர்கிறேன். ஆனால் அப்பெருந்தகையாளர் அன்று என்னைப் பாராட்டிக் கூறிய வார்த்தைகள் வாழ்வின் நெருக்கடியான ஒவ்வொரு கட்டத்திலும் எனக்கு உயிரும் உணர்வும் ஊட்டி நாடகத்துறையிலிருந்து நான் விலகாதபடி என்னைப் பாதுகாத்து வந்திருக்கின்றன என்று சொன்னால் அது மிகையாகாது.

சென்ற ஐம்பது ஆண்டுகளாக நாடகத்துறையில் இருந்து வருபவன் நான். அதன் பண்டைய நிலை, வாழ்வு, வளர்ச்சி எல்லாவற்றையும் நேரில் கண்டு அனுபவித்தவன். தமிழ் நாடகக் கலை வளர்ச்சியின் சிறப்புக்குக் காரணமாக வழிகாட்டியாக நின்றவர்களில் முதன்மையாகக் கருதத்தக்கவர்கள் தவத்திரு சங்கரதாஸ் சுவாமிகள், பம்மல் திரு. சம்பந்த முதலியார் ஆகிய இருவருமே ஆவர். சுவாமிகள் தொழில் முறைக் குழுக்களை உருவாக்கியவர்; பேராசிரியர் பயில் முறைக் குழுக்களை உருவாக்கியவர். இவ்விரு பெரியார்களையும் நாடகத்துறையில் ஈடுபடும் தமிழ் நடிகர்கள் நன்றியுணர்வோடு இதயத்தில் வைத்து என்றென்றும் போற்றக் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கிறார்கள்.

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